They Lived to See It

SEVEN SEAS BOOKS 7

Briefly,
ABOUT THE BOOK

Each story in this anthology is a favourite of the author who wrote it, and each was chosen by its author for this particular Seven Seas Books collection. More, each author is someone who was given what might be called a second chance in life – for all faced the sentence of death under the Nazis. . . . What do such authors write about? The stuff of life! The theme varies with the author, but all the stories ring with truth. One recalls the conversation on board the ship carrying himself and countless others to an unknown land, and unknown future. Another writes of a hero who knows fear. One tells of the old man who woke up too late to the horror of Nazism; still another, the story of a woman's awakening to the new times. How simple German workers pit their wit against a Nazi stooge is the theme of one story – and a post-war tale of love and mystery with curious results the theme of another. The variety of themes makes for an interesting and absorbing collection of tales.

SEVEN SEAS BOOKS

A Collection of Works in the English Language

THEY LIVED TO SEE IT

Short Stories

by Twenty German Authors

They Lived To See It

A collection of short stories, translated from the German, by

ALEXANDER ABUSCH

BRUNO APITZ

WILLI BREDEL

JURIJ BRĚZAN

ELFRIEDE BRUENING

BORIS DJACENKO

WALTER GORRISH

OTTO GOTSCHE

STEPHAN HERMLIN

WIELAND HERZFELDE

STEFAN HEYM

WOLFGANG JOHO

ALFRED KURELLA

LUDWIG RENN

MAXIMILIAN SCHEER

ANNA SEGHERS

LUDWIG TUREK

BODO UHSE

ALEX WEDDING

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Translated from the German by
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the Seven Seas Books series.*

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Contents

Foreword 9

THE IDEA

I Shall Witness the Day 12
WIELAND HERZFELDE

TIME OF TRIAL

Hiasl 16
WOLFGANG JOHO

Two Minutes 23
BRUNO APITZ

Shelter 33
ANNA SEGHERS

The Germans and the Yellow Star 42
ALEXANDER ABUSCH

Black Beetle 50
JURIJ BRĚZAN

Buchenwald 56
OTTO GOTSCHE

The Old Cripple 60
WILLI BREDEL

Return of the Gas-Mask 67
ARNOLD ZWEIG

Wolves 73
WALTER GORRISH

INTERLUDE

Journey in a Blue Swan 78
BODO UHSE

The Young Censor 87
ALFRED KURELLA

The Old Woman and the Eagle 91
ALEX WEDDING

The Shareholders' Meeting 96
LUDWIG RENN

AFTER 1945

The Concentration Camp Commander 102
STEPHAN HERMLIN

Mother and Son 117
ELFRIEDE BRUENING

The Bedouin Girl 127
MAXIMILIAN SCHEER

New Year's Eve for Liane 140
LUDWIG TUREK

The Meeting 148
BORIS DJACENKO

TIME TO COME

The Last Night of the 20th Century 158
STEFAN HEYM

Foreword

The city of Weimar, where Goethe and Schiller lived and wrote, lies among the south-western hills of what now is the German Democratic Republic. It is a shrine to culture, and the stately mansion that was Goethe's home and the charming townhouse that was Schiller's are museums. The desks they wrote at, the salons where they entertained, the chairs they sat on, the tables they ate at, the very beds in which they slept and died remain as they used them, for the world to see....

On one of the hills just beyond the shaded streets and well-tended lawns of the city is another shrine which the German Democratic Republic has also kept for the world to see: the shrine honouring the thousands upon thousands of men, women and children of many nations who died in Buchenwald Concentration Camp. Hardly a stone's throw outside the traditional centre of culture which was old Weimar, the main institutions of Buchenwald Concentration Camp stand today as they were when the Nazis built them and used them to torture and to kill.

Here one may see, so as never to forget, a different culture, the culture of the Hitlerites. Here one remembers the heroic dead who were massacred by that culture. Here one thinks of the heroic living who fought against it, despite torture racks and horror chambers.

One leaves Buchenwald in silent wondering – how did anyone survive? And what of those who spent years in Nazi prisons, and those who escaped death only by flight?

People did survive. You meet them. You talk with

them. You try to find a key to their survival. The best you can find is a thread – a belief that would not be denied, a faith all of them knew: They would live to see a Germany free of the horror of Nazism, a Germany dedicated to peace and a better way of life.

This book is a collection of short stories written by some of the German authors who lived to see the day when they came out of the concentration camps and prisons, out of the exile that took them to the four corners of the earth, and began to realise that faith. They are only a handful of the writers who are living in the German Democratic Republic, who share this past and this present, who work for this future. An anthology that included all of the writers who have this personal history in common would take several volumes.

As to the stories here collected, each was chosen by its author as a personal favourite. Some authors have dipped into the past for their theme, some examine the world round them, and some dream of the future. All have written with honesty, with wit and with heart.

It is hoped that the reader will find this a rewarding anthology of short stories and a welcome addition to our titles which have been translated from the German.

SEVEN SEAS PUBLISHERS

Berlin, 1963

The Idea

I Shall Witness the Day,

WIELAND HERZFELDE

WIELAND HERZFELDE

who wrote

I Shall Witness the Day

is German by choice. Born in Switzerland in 1896, he grew up in Austria and was a student in Berlin. In the First World War he became a Socialist. In 1917 he founded the Malik Publishing House in Berlin and remained there until he had to flee from the Nazis in 1933. He continued publishing in Prague until 1939, encouraging the young writers and poets and putting out a quantity of Soviet and other progressive literature. In New York, he worked as an anti-fascist journalist until his return to Germany in 1948. He was a Professor at Leipzig University until 1959. His books include "Evergreen" (1949), an autobiography, "Written on the Way" (1956), and a book on his brother, John Heartfield, the artist who developed photo-montage. He received the Heinrich Heine Prize in 1959.

I shall witness the day –
Maybe I must use strong glasses
to read the news
or my grown-up son
will help me from the chair
to look through the window
trembling with joy
or it may even be my grandson
reading the papers
aloud to me
old man, who is blind.

No matter: I shall witness the day
when through the capitals of Europe –
where only the police were whistling
where even the memory of me or my friends
was a crime
where he who laughed
was a cynic
and who cried
had to cry in the dark –
I shall witness the day
when an army of stern-minded soldiers
carrying the banner of justice
streams through the thousand cities,
marching and marching and marching,
growing, growing and growing
whilst from the thousand cities
from the hills and the mines and the woods
(where they lived like the wounded deer)
millions are joining the army
of a new,
of a better world.
I shall witness the day
when those who smashed the frontiers
and built hundreds more,
who enslaved the peoples of Europe
frenzied,
their foreheads streaming the sweat of fear,
shall scurry for open frontiers to escape,
for a slave, who will hide them.
There will be no frontier but the ocean,
there will be not one slave among millions
nothing but Europe:
one thundering stern-minded army.

Although they speak many a tongue
the world understands these soldiers.
Looking bewildering and strange
they will have the faces of brothers.
Everyone, everywhere, who hates the Swastika
will know, as I do: It's *my* army.

Don't doubt –
I shall witness the day. And you.

Time of Trial

Hiasl
WOLFGANG JOHO

Two Minutes
BRUNO APITZ

Shelter
ANNA SEGHERS

The Germans and the Yellow Star
ALEXANDER ABUSCH

Black Beetle
JURIJ BRĚZAN

Buchenwald
OTTO GOTSCHE

The Old Cripple
WILLI BREDEL

Return of the Gas-Mask
ARNOLD ZWEIG

Wolves
WALTER GORRISH

WOLFGANG JOHO

who wrote

Hiasl

was born in Karlsruhe in 1908, of a literary family. He became a member of the Communist Party in 1929 and proceeded to earn his doctor's degree at University. He was a newspaperman until the Gestapo arrested him in 1937. He served a three-year term and upon his release was denied the right to continue work as a journalist. In 1943 he was conscripted into the infamous Battalion 999 (the "Death Battalion") and was taken prisoner-of-war. He returned to Germany in 1946, joining the staff of a Berlin literary weekly; he was later editor-in-chief of a monthly. His novels include: "An End to All Imprisonment" and "Jeanne Peyrouton" (1949); "Escape from Loneliness" (1953); "The Turning Point" (1957). In addition, he has written a fascinating study of Wilhelm Weitling, the early Utopian Communist....

Matthias was a great hulking Bavarian who had landed in the concentration camp because of some crime of violence. He was a real duffer, so we never called him anything but Hiasl. He liked to keep himself to himself, and he worked on his own, too, whenever he got the chance. If anybody asked him to help in another gang he used to flex his muscles and say in his broad Bavarian dialect:

"I'm not that dumb! You want me to do all the work and let you others take it easy, do you?"

And when he was ordered into a gang he did less than his share, for fear of making things lighter for the chaps who were not so strong. He never bothered to answer if anybody grumbled at him, and if we political prisoners tried to get some idea of comradely behaviour into his thick skull he turned his back in contempt.

"You and your long speeches! You political chaps are always talking rot. What's so clever about your getting yourselves locked in here when you haven't done anything!"

Hiasl looked like a pretty hopeless case. But curiously enough, he began to change after he had put everybody's back up by doing something impossibly selfish.

It was like this in camp: prisoners were allowed to buy a few marks' worth of food or tobacco once a month, but you only got permission to do this after you had put aside a certain fixed sum out of the pittance you got for your work. This was prudently intended to pay for your coffin if you happened to die. So everybody had to save up for his own funeral before he was allowed to buy the few extras which he really needed to keep alive, considering the wretched prison food we got.

Well, in our barracks we political prisoners had suggested that everybody who had already put by for his funeral, and so could buy the few extras, should hand over a proportion of what he bought for those who were still not able to buy anything for themselves. At that time about a quarter of our chaps were still in this unenviable position. Since the others only had about three marks or three marks fifty a month to spend in the prison shop it was a bit of a wrench for them to give up some of what they bought. You can imagine what a tough job we had getting some of them to make the sacrifice. It was a big victory for the community spirit when we finally persuaded them all to do it, although I won't pretend that

they all did it out of a community spirit. Some just wanted to stop the begging and the envious looks that followed them around on shopping day. Others didn't like to swim against the current, but they grumbled every time they had to give out of their share. It was like trying to get contributions out of people anywhere.

Hiasl, being one of those who still could not buy anything for himself, got the benefit of this arrangement for some months. Finally the day came when he, too, had put aside the money for his coffin and could go to the shop for the first time. Then something happened which pretty well bowled us over. Hiasl absolutely refused to give up anything. Like most people, he had bought tobacco and cigarette papers for all his money and there he sat, busily rolling cigarettes and running his fingers voluptuously through the mound of tobacco in front of him, deaf to our demands, threats, scoldings and cursings.

"Whatever would be the sense of that?" he kept on muttering. "I earned it myself and I'd just like to know who's going to take any of it away from me!"

An indignant group crowded round him, cursing and calling him "greedy guts", which was about the worst insult we had for people in there. If Hiasl had said anything there would certainly have been a fight. But he didn't; he was blind and dumb and went on rolling his cigarettes. They piled up in front of him and he paused to count them from time to time, his lips moving silently. He arranged them neatly in rows, in an ecstasy of possession. It was as if, for the first time in his life, he had a physical sensation of what ownership meant. I really believe that if anybody had tried to take one cigarette away from him, he would have been capable of murder. If the whole thing hadn't been so outrageous one might almost have felt sorry for the poor fellow in his primitive greed. But of course none of us could feel sorry for him – he had been sponging on us for months.

What was to be done with him? Somebody suggested

giving him a good hiding and the idea was popular. We were against this, however, partly because we never liked to come to blows except as a last resort, and partly because we still hoped to get Hiasl to see how impossibly selfish his behaviour was. So we explained to the others that if we beat him up we should get our own shopping stopped, and suggested sending Hiasl to Coventry instead. We should simply act as if he weren't there. Some objected to that solution.

"That won't bother him a bit," they said. "He may even be glad to be left in peace."

We still thought it was worth trying. The important thing was to see that nobody got out of step, and there wasn't much fear of that, because everybody was mad at him. So we began the attempt to educate Hiasl to community living by peaceful means.

People who have never been locked up behind walls or barbed wire probably have no idea how very much prisoners depend on each other, or what it means to be isolated, shut out. I recall exactly what happened after we'd made up our minds.

Hiasl came in.

"What's to eat today?" he asked.

Nobody answered.

"What's to eat today?" he asked again, louder, nudging the man next to him.

No answer.

"Oh, I see. Well, you can all act dumb if you like. I don't care," he said and laughed.

He went over to his locker and took out a cigarette. But he had forgotten to buy matches, so he went over to a chap sitting at the table smoking and asked him for a light. Hiasl didn't get a light from him or anybody else in the barracks.

"Well, of all the . . .! I don't need you, you mugs. There are other barracks," he snorted and disappeared cursing. He came back shortly afterwards with his cigarette alight.

He wouldn't have succeeded the next day, for we saw to it that the other barracks ignored him, too, and they kept to it pretty well.

Whoever was on barracks duty generally handed out bowls beforehand, so that we could get our food more quickly. But of course he "forgot" Hiasl's bowl, so Hiasl had to fetch it himself and then run after the man dishing out the food. He said nothing, for he didn't want to give us the satisfaction of seeing him angry. There he sat, silent and apparently unmoved and immovable, eating his food in the midst of the general talk at the table which eddied over and round him.

Washing up was done by one man at each table in turn. Hiasl handed over his bowl without thinking, but it was handed back in silence. He bit back a curse and moved off to the wash-room, muttering, "You can't get me down – not me!"

Well, I shan't tell you the complete details of how we managed to isolate Hiasl. At all events, even those who had been most sceptical began to notice a change coming over him. Whereas before he had kept himself obstinately, defiantly, to himself, he now did it in a shy, worried and somehow awkward way. He was like some big animal going into a gradual decline, consumed by an unknown internal disease. But perhaps the most astonishing thing about it was that although he had always been a heavy smoker he now hardly ever touched a cigarette; not because he had no matches – he had long since made himself a slow-burning fuse.

At last he really seemed to be getting to the end of his tether, for he began to try to do little jobs in the barracks without being asked. But the bowls he wanted to wash or the broom he wanted to sweep with were taken silently out of his hand.

Surprisingly enough, what the sceptics had firmly anticipated (and we had also feared) did not happen; we knew there would be a crisis towards the end of the month

when the tobacco got scarce or was all smoked. Tempers always deteriorated then, people were nervy and prone to quarrel over trifles, and the really heavy smokers were liable to do almost anything for half a cigarette or even a fag end. This was Hiasl's big chance to break the boycott, for he still had quite a stock of cigarettes. And we knew perfectly well that even if he found only one or two chaps willing to take a smoke from him everything we had done so far would have been pointless. Hiasl must have realised this just as plainly as we did.

But he made no attempt to bribe anyone to go over to his side.

One day, right at the end of the month, when practically no one had anything left to smoke, and tempers hovered between depression and sudden flares of irritability, something quite extraordinary occurred. Some of us, myself included, saw one of our heaviest smokers go up to Hiasl, slap him on the shoulder as if everything was fine and ask him if he had half a fag to spare.

Hiasl was standing by his locker. He spun round as if he had been hit. The blood shot up into his face, he balled his fists and it looked as if he were going to hit back. The chap stepped back, startled.

"I've nothing for you, you bastard!" Hiasl shouted. "I'm not going to sell anybody anything! I'm not as far gone as that, not by a long way!"

Suddenly he gave a deep, choking sort of groan. He turned round in the deathly silence which had fallen and stammered, "It wasn't right, what I was doing... I've been behaving like a swine, yes, I know that..."

With trembling fingers he tore open his locker, pulled out the carton with his cigarettes in it and slammed it down on the table.

"There you are," he said. "Divide them up so everybody gets some. There's enough to go round..."

And he dashed out of the barracks before anyone had time to say a word.

Well, that's the story of Hiasl. After that he was one of the most helpful chaps in the camp and you wouldn't have believed he was the same man. Sometimes it only needs a little jog. But you have to go about it the right way. I don't believe there are as many hopeless cases as some people think. . . .

BRUNO APITZ

who wrote

Two Minutes

was born in 1900 in the city of Leipzig. While still in his teens, he joined the progressive youth movement. He became an actor and began to write in 1927, after he had joined the Communist Party. The Nazis arrested him in 1933, held him for three months, released him, and arrested him again in the next year. Three years later, he was sent to Buchenwald Concentration Camp where he remained until the war's end liberated the camp. Since 1945, he has been a journalist and a dramatist in the theatre and DEFA film studios. He has written several radio plays but he is most famous for his novel, "Naked Among Wolves" (1958), a gripping story of heroism, martyrdom and courage in Buchenwald. The book has been translated and filmed and televised. The author was awarded the National Prize for this fine novel.

There was dead silence in the town prison on Christmas Eve. The incessant prison noises, the rattle of doors being locked and unlocked, the shouting and yelling of guards, the clattering of prisoners up and down the iron stairs, all that had stopped. There was not even the intermittent penetrating, nerve-racking shrilling of the bell which called prisoners out for cross-examination.

A sergeant sat in the office on the ground floor, smoking a cigar and reading his paper. A sprig of evergreen was stuck between the calendar and the wall behind him. All the police except the prison guards had gone home to celebrate Christmas Eve.

Dead silence.

The prisoners on cleaning-up duty had swept out the busy week-day noises with the dirt. All that was left was this heavy silence hovering outside the locked doors of the prisoners' cells. The prison was full to overflowing and prisoners were packed five or six in a cell, except for one man in solitary confinement in cell number 146 on the second floor. Here sat a prisoner of the Gestapo, Ludwig Germer.

He had not been there long. The comrades in his part of the town had all been arrested months before, but the Gestapo had only brought him in a fortnight earlier. The bell had rung sharply at five o'clock one morning. Hedi had sat up in bed with a jerk.

"Ludwig! Who can that be?"

"They've come," he had murmured with a faint smile.

The baby was sleeping peacefully in his cot and had only wakened when the strange men began turning everything in the bedroom upside down. Hedi had gathered the frightened child into her arms. . . .

That had happened two weeks ago. Germer had seen his wife only once since then, three days after his arrest. He had been fetched out of his cell and brought down the iron staircase, so that he had been quite sure he was in for another cross-examination. They took him into a room full of people from outside and he had found himself suddenly face to face with his wife, in the midst of other prisoners who also had visitors.

Hedi was shocked to the very soul when she saw his unshaved, battered face. Germer himself had no idea what he looked like, for he had no mirror and did not realise how terribly changed he was.

Police guards in charge of the visits hustled relatives out again. The prisoners were fetched and brought back to their cells. There was a great deal of pushing and shoving. Hedi and Ludwig had barely got used to the sight of each other when they were torn apart again and she had almost reached the door before Ludwig realised that they had not said a word to each other. He managed to stammer a sentence. Hedi's face was distorted with grief.

"Don't worry, Hedi. I'll be back. I'll be home for Christmas. Give my love to the boy."

And he had smiled, forgetting his disfigured mouth and gaping upper jaw, for they had knocked out his teeth the first day.

Germer had been the last man brought in in a wave of arrests. The newly organised underground Party group in his section of the town had been completely broken up by the arrest of all the comrades in it. Gestapo Commissar Zocher had had the evidence beaten out of the arrested men bit by bit. He was a refined man himself and never took any direct part in the beating up. If he could not persuade a man to speak out he would have him brought down into the cellar, to a solitary cell in which stood a small table with a typewriter on it, a chair in the middle of the room and a water-tap in the corner, beside which hung a dirty blood-stained towel. Here six SS men in civilian clothes prepared obstinate prisoners for cross-examination.

"So you won't talk, you swine? Look out, in a quarter of an hour you'll be singing like a nightingale."

The prisoner was shoved into the chair, two men held his arms tightly behind the chair-back while two others held his outstretched feet hard against the floor in front, another grasped him by the hair from behind and the sixth stood between his parted legs in front and beat him with his huge fists until his screams faded away into whimpers of agony. Then when they thought he was sufficiently compliant they shoved the chair up to the table and handed

the wreck over to the commissar. Sometimes they had to drag an unconscious man over to the water-tap and let the water spurt over him until he revived.

Many comrades held out. But there were others, beaten into bloody, shapeless bundles, who weakened and betrayed names and contacts. This was how Zocher had got all his information about the organisation until he knew exactly what went on in that part of the town. Now he had to go a step further and find out about the local group's contact with the underground district Party organisation. As usual, only one man held this contact. And Germer was the man. He was Zocher's last hope and the most important link in the chain leading to the next higher organisation.

During the past fourteen days Germer had been through everything his comrades had gone through. He had been dragged down to the cellar more than once. He was as strong physically as the men who beat him and had so far survived it all. It was as if their pounding fists only beat him more firmly together – like beating a piece of iron. Zocher had met his match.

"You won't come out of here alive, my lad," he snorted. "Either you talk or I'll kill you."

There was dead silence at this extremely late hour on Christmas Eve.

Germer sat on his stool, his hands flat under his thighs, painfully conscious of the sinister lack of noise.

A single bulb shone palely through its wire mesh in the ceiling. Germer looked up. He felt curiously tense. His tongue played over his toothless upper gum, where the flesh was beginning to heal. His brain felt empty. The light in the ceiling attracted him. His brain began to work again.

He thought of moving his stool over to the middle of the cell, crouching down like a runner at the start, then springing up with an arm held high . . . He might have to try several times before he managed it, he thought . . . The

glass splinters would be as sharp as a razor blade . . . He caught himself feeling his pulse with his thumb. That brought him back to himself.

Germer stood up and began to walk up and down the cell, trying to shake off these tempting thoughts. He knew why they had come. He was looking for some escape from his tortured body and soul.

. . . Either you talk or I'll kill you . . .

. . . Don't be afraid, I'll be home for Christmas . . .

The words swam together in the maelstrom which threatened to drag Germer down. But with all his strength of will he tore himself out of it. These were the thoughts which had tempted him to break the bulb in the ceiling with his outstretched arm.

This damnable silence, he thought. Why doesn't somebody scream? Why doesn't somebody start banging at the door? Out! Let us out . . .!

Germer laughed suddenly, a barking laugh, as he stood there in the middle of the cell. The laugh broke out of his mouth as if out of an open wound.

"It's Christmas! Christmas!" he shouted, like a market crier.

The laugh changed into a hacking, painful scream. Germer flung himself round against the wall, stood there upright with his forehead pressed against it, and wept.

How good that felt . . .

The pain poured through him like warm rain. A big, strong man, he wept like a child.

"I'm only weeping because it feels so good . . . because it's Christmas and I wanted to be home with you today . . . dear, dear Hedi . . . dear, dear boy . . . Don't be angry with me . . . I can't come . . . I want to come so much, so much, but I can't . . ."

Suddenly the iron bar grated in the cell door. The key turned sharply twice and the guard stood in the doorway.

Germer swung round and stared in horror at the guard.

"Come," was all the guard said.

Germer could not pull himself together at once. His thoughts were still a confused welter. He buttoned his jacket mechanically and stepped out of the cell. They walked along the silent gangway and down the iron stairs to the ground floor.

Hedi is here, thought Germer, the memory of what had been in his heart still echoing.

Another guard brought him over to the police station. Germer knew the way, for he had often come along here for cross-questioning. But this time he went willingly, for he had a sensation of pleasurable expectancy. Hedi must have come, he felt quite sure of that now. But only Zocher was in the room to which the guard brought him.

Germer was not conscious of disappointment, however. He felt a slackening of all the tension inside him and a coldness round his heart.

He took in the situation at a glance.

A little white package lay on the table, carefully done up with green ribbon. Zocher's coat hung over the chair-back where he had just thrown it. Zocher himself sat at the desk in a new, dark blue suit. There was a gleam of fresh white cuffs below his sleeves. He was certainly going on to a Christmas party from here.

"Sit down, Herr Germer."

Zocher pointed to the chair in front of the desk and gestured to the guard at the door to leave them alone. He lit a cigarette and offered Germer the package.

"Cigarette?"

Germer shook his head.

Zocher overlooked the rejection and pushed the pack aside.

"You're surprised that I called you down just now."

He sat on the corner of the desk.

"Today is Christmas Eve, Germer . . ."

It sounded completely unofficial, like his whole appearance and behaviour. Germer did not answer. He thought of his wife and son, so far away, so unattainable

and – so lonely . . . and swallowed down his weakness, clenching his fists as they lay on his knees.

"I've gained a respect for you in the past fourteen days, Germer. You're a splendid chap. We should take off our hats to people like you . . . I should like to send you home. Today . . . now . . ."

He got up quickly and began walking up and down, scolding himself angrily.

"Damn it all! I'm only human. And it's Christmas, after all. Shouldn't we want to give others a bit of happiness? Just think of it! Your wife, your little son . . . suddenly the bell rings and you're standing there . . . God, Germer, I can just picture how happy they'd be!"

Germer's head sank on his breast. The pain he had not been able to drown in tears broke out anew. With it all he knew perfectly well that this was only another of this smooth devil's tricks to try and soften him up.

Zocher came up quite close to Germer and spoke to him from behind.

"It's no good, Germer. Your group is completely broken up and even if I don't get the name of your district contact from you I'll get it some other way. It may take a few days longer, but that doesn't matter. I can take my time."

He paused. Germer sat there, apathetic, tearless. Zocher waited tensely. Then Germer heard the voice again, boring into his brain.

"I'm making it easy for you. You don't even need to give me the real name. Just give me his cover name. I can find out the rest for myself. Give me the cover name, Germer, and then you can go home. I give you my word, here and now."

It was lies and deceit, all of it, Germer knew, but still he had to put up a terrific fight with himself.

Christmas Eve, he thought. I just ring the bell . . . only a cover name . . . then I'll suddenly ring the bell . . . I can just imagine how happy they'd be! . . .

Germer felt himself clenching his hands between his knees. He had not noticed it before. He heaved himself up and turned to face Zocher, who stood with his legs a little apart and his hands in his coat pockets.

"Send me back to my cell."

Zocher shrugged regretfully.

"A pity . . ."

On his way to the door to call the guard, Zocher suddenly clapped his hand to his forehead.

"Oh, I almost forgot," he said apologetically. "Don't you want to take your present? Your wife brought it."

He went over to the desk and picked up the small, neat package.

"Was my wife here?" Germer asked, painfully excited.

Zocher laid the package down again, carefully, and answered, almost considerately.

"She's still here – waiting for you. She's brought the boy with her, too. A dear little fellow, I may say."

A scream gathered inside Germer and the effort to hold it back seemed almost to burst his chest. He breathed heavily. He moved blindly over to the desk.

"My wife? You said my wife . . .? Where is she?"

Zocher smiled, went round the desk and took a sheet of paper out of his dispatch case which lay upon it.

"This is the warrant for your immediate release. I'll sign it, see? There you are."

He signed his name to the paper. Germer was only half conscious of what he was doing.

"Where is she?" he gasped.

"She's sitting in the main office, waiting for you," Zocher replied casually.

Germer blinked.

"Why isn't she here?"

Zocher smiled again – almost a friendly smile.

"I wanted to bring her a surprise for Christmas."

He moved round the desk again, close to Germer, and showed him the signed paper.

"Lucky, eh? Of course, there's still that little thing for you to do, you understand how it is, don't you? But then we can go home together. Each of us to his family. Well, Germer, old man, isn't that something?"

Germer saw a curious light in the Gestapo man's eyes. He was still breathing heavily. But he concentrated his entire will on fighting down his emotion, trying to count his heartbeats until they had slowed down. The constricted muscles in his face relaxed and when he felt sure that his tortured soul had regained its balance he said calmly, "How long does it take to get from here to the main office?"

Zocher raised his eyebrows, for he did not see the point of the question.

"Not more than two minutes."

"Is the cover name so important to you?"

"Of course. If it weren't I shouldn't be likely to offer you your freedom in exchange."

Germer had himself completely under control again.

"All right," he said coolly. "I'll tell you the name in two minutes' time."

Zocher beamed.

"Happy Christmas, Germer, happy Christmas!" he exclaimed, ran over to the desk, tore a sheet of paper out of his notebook and stood ready with a pencil.

Germer followed his movements with half-closed eyes.

"I'll tell you the name in two minutes, but only in the presence of my wife."

Zocher flung the pencil down. He had been caught out. He stared up at Germer, who could not suppress a smile.

"Man," Zocher stammered. "That won't do."

Before Zocher could stop him Germer snatched at the little package. It was as light as a feather. He tore it open. It was an empty chocolate carton.

Zocher scowled. He pressed the button on his desk. The guard appeared. With one stride the Gestapo man was in front of Germer.

"You swine!" he shouted, and hit Germer right in the middle of his faintly smiling mouth. A drop of blood fell on Zocher's white cuff.

"Get that swine out of here!" he roared.

Germer turned to the guard.

The prisoners were already asleep and the silence even more profound by the time Germer went back up the iron stairs to his cell. The guard locked him in.

The cell was in darkness. For a couple of breaths Germer stood in the middle of the cell while the last drops of strength drained out of him. Exhausted, he laid his forehead against the wall again, closed his eyes, but did not weep.

"I can't come . . . don't be angry with me . . ." he whispered into the darkness welling up within him.

A long way off a single tram whined faintly on its tracks.

ANNA SEGHERS

who wrote

Shelter

is the world-famous German novelist. She was born in Mainz in 1900. She studied at Cologne and Heidelberg Universities. She joined the Communist Party in 1928. When the Nazis took over power in 1933 she was arrested, but managed to escape to Paris. Here she worked for anti-fascist journals until she was forced to flee in 1940. She arrived in Mexico in 1941, where she took part in the "Free Germany" movement. Back in Germany in 1947, she acted for a time as chairman of the German Writers' Union. She is a founding member of the Academy of Arts. Her long list of works includes the famous "Seventh Cross" and "The Dead Stay Young"; two novellas, published in English translation by Seven Seas Books, and "The Decision" (1959). She holds the Lenin Peace Prize, awarded her in 1951, and the National Prize for 1951 and 1959.

One morning in September 1940, when the big swastika flag put up by the Germans in the occupied countries fluttered on the Place de la Concorde in Paris and the queues in front of the shops were as long as the streets themselves, a certain Louise Meunier, wife of a turner and mother of three children, heard that eggs were on sale in a shop in the 14th Arrondissement.

She ran out, stood for an hour in the queue and got five eggs, one for each of the family. She remembered that an old school friend, Annette Villard, worked in an hotel in this street, so she looked in to see her. Annette was ordinarily a quiet, sensible woman, so Louise was surprised to find her very much upset.

While Louise helped her to clean the windows and wash-basins, Annette told her that at noon the day before the Gestapo had arrested a man who had been registered as an Alsatian at the hotel but, as it turned out, had in fact escaped some years before from a German concentration camp.

As she polished a window, Annette continued the story: the man had been taken to La Santé and would soon be sent back to Germany and probably shot. What worried her much more than the fate of the man – for a man was a man, after all, and there was a war on, she said – was his son. He had a boy of twelve who had shared his room, went to school in Paris and spoke French as well as she did. The mother was dead and the whole situation was confused, as it generally was with these foreigners.

When the boy got back from school they had told him of his father's arrest. He had not said a word or shed a tear. But when the Gestapo officer told him to pack his things and be ready when they called for him the next day to send him back to relatives in Germany, he had suddenly asserted that he would sooner throw himself in front of a car than go back to Germany. The Gestapo officer retorted sharply that it was not a question of going back or not going back, but of whether he went back to his relatives or to a reformatory.

The boy had confided in Annette that night and asked her to help him. Early in the morning she had taken him to friends who owned a little café. He was there now, waiting. She had thought there would be no difficulty in finding someone to take care of the boy, but so far she had only had "No" for an answer, for people were terrified.

Her own landlady was mortally afraid of the Germans and was already angry because the boy had run away.

Louise heard all this in silence. When Annette had finished she said, "I'd like to take care of a boy like that."

Annette told her the name of the café.

"And you wouldn't be afraid to take the boy his clothes, would you?" she added.

Louise showed the café proprietor a note from Annette, whereupon he ushered her into the billiard-room, which was closed at that hour of the morning. And there was the boy, gazing out into the yard. He was as big as her eldest son and dressed much the same; his eyes were grey and there was nothing about his features to suggest that he was a foreigner. He looked sharply at her, but did not thank her.

Up till now Louise had been a mother like other mothers; she had stood in queues, made something out of nothing and a great deal out of very little, and had done piece work in addition to her housework. She had taken all that for granted; but now, with the boy's eyes upon her, the extent of what she had to take for granted increased enormously and her strength to meet it also increased.

"Come to the Café Biard outside the market at seven this evening," she said.

She hurried home, for she would have plenty to do in the kitchen to make a little go a long way and look appetising on the table. Her husband was already home. He had served a year on the Maginot Line, had been demobilised three weeks before and was now working half time at his old factory, which had reopened the previous week. Most of his free time he spent in the public house, but he always came home angry with himself for having left some of his meagre wages there.

Louise was too much upset to notice his ugly mood. To prepare him for what was coming, she began at once while she was beating up the eggs to tell him what had happened. But when she got to the point in her story where the

boy had run away from the hotel and was looking for a place to hide from the Germans, he interrupted her.

"Your friend Annette was very silly to encourage such nonsense. In her place I should have locked the boy in. That German ought to be left to deal with his own countrymen as best he can. He hasn't managed to look after his own son, so the officer is quite right to want to send the boy back home. The fact is, Hitler has occupied the world and no amount of talking is going to alter things."

His wife was sensible enough to change the subject quickly. She realised for the first time what a change had come over her husband. In the old days he had joined in every strike and every demonstration, and on July 14th he had always behaved as if he wanted to storm the Bastille all on his own. But he was like the giant Christopher in the fairy-tale, she thought, and there were plenty of people like him who always wanted to go over to the side they thought the strongest, and they all ended up on the devil's side. But neither her own nature nor her busy life left her time for regrets. This man was her husband, and she was his wife, and now there was this foreign boy who was waiting for her.

In the evening she went over to the café near the market. "I can't take you home with me till tomorrow," she told the boy.

He stared hard at her and said, "You needn't do it if you're afraid."

Louise answered drily that it was only a matter of waiting a day. She asked the woman who owned the café to keep the boy overnight. He was her nephew, she said. There was nothing very remarkable about such a request, for Paris was full of refugees.

"I met cousin Alice yesterday," she said to her husband next day. "Her husband is in Pithiviers in the prisoner-of-war hospital and she wants to go and see him for a couple of days. She's asked me to take her boy until she comes back."

Her husband, who hated strangers inside his four walls, muttered that she had better be careful the child didn't get left on her hands. So she fixed up a mattress and went to fetch the strange boy.

"Why don't you want to go home?" she asked him on the way.

"You can leave me here if you're afraid," he repeated. "I won't go back to my relatives. Hitler had my mother and father arrested. They had been writing, printing and distributing leaflets. My mother died. Look, one of my front teeth is missing. They knocked that out for me at school because I wouldn't sing their song with them. My relatives are Nazis, too. They treated me the worst, and they said terrible things against my father and mother."

Louise told him not to talk about this to anyone – not to her husband or the children or the neighbours.

Her own children did not take any particular liking to the strange boy, nor did they specially dislike him. He kept himself to himself and never laughed. Her husband took an immediate dislike to him. He said the boy's expression annoyed him. He scolded his wife for sharing their rations with the child and grumbled at her cousin for dumping her son on them. His grumbling generally ended up in a tirade on how they had lost the war in any case; the Germans were in occupation, but they were at least disciplined and knew how to keep order.

Once when the boy upset the milk-can he jumped up and hit him.

"It's better here than over there," said the boy later, when Louise wanted to comfort him.

"I should like to see a real piece of cheese on the table again for a change," said her husband one morning.

He came home very excited that evening.

"Do you know what I saw today?" he exclaimed. "A huge German lorry loaded high with cheese. They buy up whatever they fancy. They just print millions of banknotes and spend them!"

Two or three weeks later Louise re-visited her friend Annette.

Annette was not at all pleased to see her, however, and warned her not to show her face in that quarter. The Gestapo had cursed and threatened. They had found out where the boy spent the night, that some woman had come there, that the two had left at different times. On her way home Louise thought about the danger in which she was involving herself and her family. Yet, somehow, the more she thought about what she had done on a sudden impulse the more convinced she was that she had been right – especially when she looked at the queues in front of the open shops, the shutters down before those that were closed, the swastikas over the doorways, and the German cars hooting as they dashed down the boulevards. When she got back to her kitchen she stroked the boy's hair in a renewed gesture of welcome.

Her husband grumbled that she was crazy about the boy. He was sorry for his own sons, so he vented his ill temper on the strange child. By now his hopes had turned to forebodings of a wretched, fettered future. The boy was too quiet and too careful to give any real cause for punishment, but the husband hit him anyway, claiming that he had a cheeky expression.

The man had gone on spending his free time in the public house, but even this little pleasure, which cheered him up some, was taken away. A forge at the end of the lane was confiscated by the Germans, and the lane, which had hitherto been quiet and free of swastikas, now swarmed with German mechanics and was crowded with German vehicles waiting for repairs. Nazi soldiers packed the public house and made themselves at home there.

Louise's husband could not bear the sight of them. She often found him sitting glumly at the kitchen table. Once, after he had been sitting there without moving for nearly an hour, with his head in his hands, his eyes wide open, she asked him what he was thinking about.

"Oh, about everything and nothing," he answered, "and about something quite out of the way, too. I've been thinking about that German your friend Annette told you about. You remember? – the German who was against Hitler, who was arrested by the Germans here. I'd like to know what happened to him and his son."

"I saw Annette the other day," his wife answered. "They took the German away to La Santé. He may have been killed since then. The boy has disappeared. Paris is big. He'll have found shelter some place."

Since nobody felt like drinking his glass of wine amongst Germans, the neighbours often came to the Meunier's kitchen and sat over a couple of bottles, something which had seldom happened before and which Meunier would not even have liked. Most of them were his workmates and they spoke quite openly about things. Their boss had handed over his office to the German commissar, who came and went as he liked. German experts tested, weighed and passed everything that went out of the factory. The administration no longer made any attempt to hide what they were slaving for. The finished parts, made of stolen metal, were all shipped East to cut the throats of people in other countries. And the result for the workers was shorter work-schedules, cut wages and compulsory transfers.

Louise lowered the blinds and they kept their voices down. The strange boy avoided looking people in the face, as if he were afraid that the bitterness in his eyes would betray what was in his heart. He had got so pale and thin that Meunier looked at him sullenly and said he was afraid the child was ill and would infect his own children.

Louise had written a letter to herself in which her cousin asked her to keep the boy a little longer, because her husband was very ill indeed and she wanted to find a room near him and stay there for a while.

"She's taking the easy way out with that lad," Meunier grumbled.

Louise quickly praised the boy and reminded her husband that he got up every morning at four o'clock to go to the market and had managed to buy a piece of beef that very day without giving up any ration marks.

Two sisters, who had always been rather doubtful characters, lived in rooms looking out on the same courtyard as the Meuniers. They got into the habit of going over to the public house and sitting on the laps of the German mechanics. The local policeman looked on for a time, then took the sisters down to the police station where, amidst their tears and protests, they were entered on the prostitutes' list. Everybody in the lane was delighted, but this caused the sisters to behave even worse. The German mechanics went in and out of their rooms and made themselves at home in the courtyard. The noise could be heard in the Meuniers' kitchen and he and his mates were thoroughly sick of it.

Meunier had stopped praising German discipline. His whole life – at work and at home, his larger and smaller pleasures, his comfort, his honour, his peace and quiet, his food and the very air he breathed – had been thoroughly, systematically poisoned by it.

One day when Meunier was alone with his wife he burst out after a long silence, "They're in power and we can't do a thing! If only someone in the world was stronger! But we're powerless. If we open our mouths they beat us to death. Now that German Annette told you about – you may have forgotten about him, but I haven't. He at least risked something. And his son – I respect that child. Your cousin can get herself out of her own mess with her boy. That doesn't interest me in the least. But I'd take that German boy in any day. That would be something, now. I'd think more of him than I do of my own sons. I'd feed him better, too. Just suppose we were to keep a boy like

that here, with those bandits going in and out and never suspecting a thing about what I was up to and what sort of chap I really am or whom I've got hidden here! Why, I'd welcome a boy like that with open arms!"

His wife turned her back to him.

"You've taken him in already," she said.

I heard this story from Annette, who had tired of her former job and had come to work in my hotel in the 16th Arrondissement.

ALEXANDER ABUSCH

who wrote

The Germans and the Yellow Star

was a Communist of long standing when the Nazis took over. Born in 1902 in Nuremberg, he had to leave Germany in 1933. He went to Mexico and while en route in Paris, he helped edit "The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror". In Mexico, he edited the German-language papers "Red Flag" and "New Germany". Returning to his homeland in 1946, he served as Secretary of the League of Culture and, later, as Minister of Culture of the G.D.R. He has written a number of valuable Marxist literary studies and shorter cultural essays. His longer works include "A Nation on the Wrong Road" (1946), "Literature and Reality" (1952), a book about contemporary German literature (1953), and a study of Schiller (1955), as well as a book on the German poet Johannes R. Becher. In 1955 he was awarded the National Prize.

In Lisbon the *Serpa Pinto* took on several hundred Jews who had come direct from Germany, men and women, mostly older people. Their age and their entry permits to San Domingo or Cuba were in most cases all that had stood between them and the horrors of the ghetto in Lublin or certain death in the Rokitno marshes. They were herded into the ship's bow and suffered terribly from lack of air and seasickness.

Another world had gathered in the stern, which was no less crowded with refugees from France and North Africa; most of these were healthy young people; many were politically minded; many had managed to survive all the horrors of the French concentration camps. People talked more about Germany here and many of the Germans amongst them were already wondering when they would be able to return and when they would have a chance to fight for a free Germany. But you could often hear the despairing remark that all the Germans were on Hitler's side. The people who said this were Jews who had been chased from one country to another for many years and who now believed that they were saying farewell to Europe forever.

They had only to move over a few steps and get into conversation with the Jews who had just come from Germany to revise the ideas born out of their many bitter disappointments although it was not easy to get these passengers to talk about Germany. You had to lie on deck beside them in rain, wind and sun for hours on end and gradually win their confidence through daily small talk. But as the ship steered farther and farther south towards San Domingo the cheerful sunshine of the new hemisphere seemed finally to crack the last barriers of reserve.

The first to break the ice was a woman with greying fair hair whose speech and general appearance betrayed her middle-class origin. She came from some little country town in Hessen.

"My family has lived on the same spot for the past hundred and fifty years," she began. "When the farmers heard that we were leaving they came over secretly, one by one, to say good-bye to us. Their wives wept with us. And one of them said what everybody else was thinking, If Hitler wins it'll be even worse for us than it has been for you."

A group of elderly women from Vienna began to talk, too, bewailing their fate. One of them, whose husband had

been disabled in the First World War, had been horribly beaten up by an SA man in her own apartment. Another told us how she had been haunted right up to the last day by the fear of being sent to Lublin. A third related that a family who had always been good to her had given her some fish, which Jews were not allowed to buy; the porter had denounced her and she had been locked up in a cellar and then dragged off to the police station.

From their stories it was clear that although Austria had been occupied by the Germans for three and a half years, there were still police officers who showed sympathy for the Jewish victims of the Nazis even if in a very cautious way.

"What did ordinary people say about all this brutality?" I asked.

The "woman with the fish" replied that she had numerous Catholic friends.

"When I left Vienna early in November many of them had had news from the Eastern front that their sons, sons-in-law or brothers had been killed," she said.

"Lots of non-Jews are against the Nazis, you know," said the wife of the disabled man, lowering her voice to a whisper. "A man from a big factory came to see me and took down all the details of what had happened to me and the name of the SA man who beat me. They're keeping lists for later on."

"I had to deal with a special office when I was arranging to emigrate," the "woman with the fish" added. "The official was friendly and arranged everything quickly. 'Why don't you hang on here? What do you want to go to Cuba for?' he asked me. 'Especially now, when all this dirty business is sure to end soon.'"

Not far from the Vienna group another group of people generally sat together; they came from Berlin, Koenigsberg, Frankfurt-on-Main, the Rhineland and Franconia and had made friends on the voyage. The last thing they had heard before leaving Germany was Hitler's statement

that the German offensive in October would mean the "final defeat" of the Red Army. Now they waited tensely every day for the meagre radio news reports at noon, for we were without newspapers on the long sea voyage and had nothing but rumours to go upon. The successes of the Soviet troops, coming as a complete surprise to them, encouraged them to speak more freely, and they, too, began to tell their stories.

The one young girl whose heart trouble – either genuine or invented by the Gestapo doctor who had examined her – had provided her with the excuse to join her parents on this voyage, took her yellow star out of her pocket.

"Have you seen one of these?" she asked, and pointed to the letters – *Jude* – printed in an ornate style intended to look Hebraic. "Do you know what the letters stand for? *Italien Und Deutschland Erledigt* – (Italy and Germany done for) –"

This brought the conversation round to a discussion of how the people inside Germany had reacted to the introduction of the Jewish star.

"In Frankfurt Jews were only allowed to stand on the front platform of the second tram-car," said an old man with an unmistakable Frankfurt accent. "Once an Aryan who got in there, too, was told by the conductor to move along into the centre of the car. 'So long as I'm in my right mind I'll stand here,' the man had retorted. 'It'll be time enough to go in there when I'm quite crazy.'

"There were no points for vegetables or for fruit for children on our ration cards. The police once found a pound of tomatoes in a Jewish apartment they were searching and the family had to pay a fine of 150 marks. But after the yellow star was introduced, our Aryan friends began to bring us food and they let us hide in their cellars. Many people were too decent to join in with the Nazis against the Jews."

You often heard the word *decent*.

"The average Berliner is perhaps too decent to believe

Goebbels' talk," said an elderly Berlin woman. "The first day I had to travel by suburban railway wearing my Jewish star a lady sitting opposite me kept glancing at me. I noticed her writing something. When she got out at Charlottenburg station she handed me a book. I found a slip of paper in it on which she had written: *When I saw you sitting there with the star on your coat I was overcome with shame for us all. Please accept this book as a present from me.*"

Mention of the suburban railway reminded another Berliner, a former teacher who had worked in a big factory, of something which had happened to him.

"There's a *Jews Not Allowed* sign outside tobacconists' shops. The first day we wore our yellow stars the other workers gave us cigars and cigarettes on the way to work on the suburban railway. A friend of mine had a man with a swastika on his collar sitting next to him. He felt the man shove something into his pocket. My friend was terrified, of course, for he thought it was a provocation. But when he got out he felt in his pocket and found it was a meat sandwich the man had given him."

The widow of a former government official, who spoke and looked like what she was, joined in here.

"In our part of the Rhineland people were very decent to us, even after we had to wear the Jewish star. Apart from a few rowdies nobody ever shouted after us in the street. In Neuss, where nearly everybody is Catholic, a strange man raised his hat to my nephew, who stopped and said he did not know him.

"'I lift my hat to everyone wearing that star,' the man said. And in a little village I have a cousin who told the mayor that she would not hold it against him if he did not speak to her in the street any more.

"'I shall greet you even more openly in future,' he replied."

"The first day I had to wear the yellow star I felt terrible," said a woman from Duesseldorf who spoke with the

Rhineland accent so familiar to me. "I didn't dare to look people in the face. But when I passed a queue in front of the tobacconists' somebody called 'Chin up!' I met a woman pushing a hand-cart who stopped me and asked me if I'd had to pay for the star.

"'Yes, ten pfennigs,' I said.

"'Why, those people have gone crazy!' she snorted."

The man I spoke to next was an intellectual from Koenigsberg. He talked about many other things besides the sufferings of the Jews.

"I had plenty of Aryan friends who went on speaking to me after I had to wear the yellow star – decent people whom I'd known for twenty years or more. One of them worked as head foreman in an aeroplane factory which employed more than three thousand workers. Every morning the workers' first question was – 'What's the news on the foreign radio?' My Aryan friend was quite sure that Hitler can't win with people in this state of mind, especially now that everybody is afraid the Americans will come in on the other side."

"Is it true that the Soviet fliers have never been able to hit Koenigsberg, as the German radio claims?" I asked.

"Oh no, of course that's not true. They've hit us pretty hard several times."

A Berliner wearing a grey coachman's cap began to tell about the British raids, especially those in May 1941; a whole row of houses near St George's Church had simply been swept away, and the Opera House and the City Library on Unter den Linden, houses in Kaiser Wilhelm Strasse and Fehrbelliner Strasse, the town hall in Schoeneberg, and Lehrter station bridge had all been reduced to a shambles. But after that the raids were not so frequent and had done less damage, he said.

Two little stories he told sounded like new legends.

"Jews were not allowed to use the air raid shelter in Blumen Strasse; they were told to use the cellar of an undertaker's shop. But in the very first raid after the new

regulation was issued the Aryans' air raid shelter got a direct hit and everybody in it was buried under the rubble. The undertaker who was a strict Protestant, said, 'The Jews were to have had the worst of it, but that was not God's will.'"

He paused to give the exact numbers of the houses where this had happened, and then went on, "You know, even when we were already on the way to Potsdam station Hitler still thought it necessary to have blood-thirsty anti-Jewish leaflets distributed telling people that the Jews were responsible for the death of every single German soldier. If the Germans were really so anti-Jewish not a single one of us would be alive after these nine years. There are still plenty of decent people, except that they don't speak out."

A plump little woman with prematurely grey hair often joined us. The dark shadows under her eyes showed that she had wept a great deal. But it was a long time before she could be persuaded to join in the conversation.

"You come from Essen, don't you?" I asked her.

"No, but not very far from there," she answered with the ghost of a smile. "You recognise the dialect, I should guess."

And then she told me what had happened to her.

"I had had a visa for myself and my fifteen-year-old son for a year. We were to join my husband, who left Germany three years ago. Last winter we had air raids every night for thirteen weeks. We had to go down to the cellar every single night. My son could no longer sleep; his sleep nerve was dead. We sent him to a Jewish sanatorium for nervous disorders. One day all the patients were sent off to Poland. They were gassed, my son as well."

It would have been easy to understand if this woman, whose son was murdered by the Nazis, had ceased to believe that there was any good in the Germans. Yet she was the one who told me how dissatisfied the miners were, not only with their own conditions but also with the whole Nazi regime.

"A soldier who lived next door to us said quite frankly that he was 'not for Adolf', as he put it; if he had been he wouldn't have spoken to me. 'If he wins it's going to be much worse for all of us, for we'll have to lick the boots of everybody in uniform,' he said. When I was passing through Berlin another soldier apologised when he saw my yellow star. 'I'd like to help you with your luggage,' he said, 'but it would cause too much unpleasantness.'

"A miner once stopped a friend of mine in the street, pointed at her star and said, 'Don't take it too much to heart. When the day of reckoning comes we shall at least know where we stand and shan't go punishing the wrong people by mistake.'"

These were the things which people who had left Germany as late as October or November 1941 were saying on the *Serpa Pinto*. It helps us to understand why Goebbels was continually scolding the "friends of the Jews" and why he had to publish his ten Nazi commandments. You could not possibly doubt the truth of what these people, coming from all parts of Germany, said on that ship.

When the ship docked in San Domingo, Cuba and Mexico and these elderly passengers saw their sons or daughters, sunburnt and cheerful, waiting for them on the quay, they hurried ashore in a fever of joy. They had begun a new life – without any yellow star.

But the impression which remains strongest with me is that of the Jewish woman who travelled across the ocean with us to meet her husband, leaving her murdered son behind but not forgetting, in the midst of her grief, that there were some Germans who hated Hitler.

JURIJ BRĚZAN

who wrote

Black Beetle

is the Sorb writer and poet, born in 1916. After the Nazis took power he worked with a national resistance group until he had to flee to Poland and Czechoslovakia. He returned secretly to Dresden in 1938 but was caught and imprisoned. With the outbreak of war he was conscripted into the army. In 1945, upon his return to Germany, he took up youth and cultural work among the Sorbs. His writings embrace his many poems, stories and novels about life in a Sorb village. Among his published works are "Corn Grows in the Balk" (1951), and "Fifty-two Weeks Make a Year" (published 1953, filmed 1955), also "The Student" (1958) and "The Fallow Years" (1961), a translated title in our Seven Seas Books series, from which is taken the excerpt which follows. He won the National Prize in 1951 and a Sorb literary prize in 1959.

This was Felix' third day working in the quarry; his pay was sixpence an hour.

They were shifting paving-stones, sharp-edged five-inch blocks. In the gang were Michel Domsch, Johann Schuster, the clarinet-player, Peter and Felix.

The driver of the bulldozer was sitting on a pile of stones in the mild sun, smoking and relaxing.

"No need to work yourselves to death for me," he said, "the stones will get there soon enough."

"Where?" asked the clarinet-player.

"Nuremberg," said the driver, "to get things booming. The marching, I mean."

The foreman came up. "If you keep on lazing about," he said, "I'll have to knock a penny an hour off your wages."

He went away.

The driver said, "There's a chap coming at lunch-time who'll give you the full story about why you have to step on it."

"Who is he?" asked Michel.

"A Black Beetle, probably."

Black Beetle was the name they gave the senior officials of the German Labour Front.

Michel Domsch spat absent-mindedly, then hurled a few stone blocks against the steel girding of the shed. He grinned broadly. "If the boss comes over, tell him I just left."

He disappeared down the steep steps into the quarry pit. He searched everywhere for his protective goggles. He exchanged a few words with cronies here and there, with Kutschank and Jakob Hanusch, and went on looking for his goggles. He looked for them in the smithy's, then in the workmen's huts and finally in the hooter-man's stove in the canteen. When he could not find his glasses anywhere he pulled them out of his trouser pocket, put them on his nose and went back to his paving-stones.

"Foreman been here?" he asked breezily.

"No."

"Perhaps the Black Beetle is already with him," he said.

At lunch-time, when they put their noses inside the canteen, they saw the Black Beetle sitting in a corner with the foreman. Michel Domsch waved to Felix. He pulled him behind the canteen. "If anyone comes," he said, "whistle."

Felix had no cause to whistle. Michel Domsch squirmed

across the roof to the chimney, placed a flat plate over it, then let himself slide back.

"Get it?" he asked.

Felix shook his head.

"You'll see," said Domsch.

The canteen had filled up. The men on the benches were spooning up their food hastily. The Black Beetle was still sitting in the corner with the foreman.

Everyone seemed to be in a good temper. Bensch, a fat man who had once been a mason on a farm, called out, "Well, Willy, what about a brandy for your old mates! Now that you've risen in the world!"

Willy Messer was the Black Beetle. Formerly he had worked in the quarry; he had never known which side he was on. But two weeks before Hitler he had stuck his snub nose into the air, sniffed and bought himself a brown shirt. Now he wore brown boots and an old brown suit as well. His bandy legs were as bowed as ever and to judge by his face he was more stupid than ever. At the moment he was snorting and rasping.

Michel Domsch nodded to the hooter-man, whose job it was to keep the oven plate warm enough for the food pails. The hooter-man chucked on wood enthusiastically. The foreman watched him astounded.

"I wouldn't like him to get cold," said the hooter-man.

The Black Beetle stood up in his corner and as he prepared to speak he swallowed his brandy at a gulp. Michel Domsch called out, "We don't understand a word, Willy, and we'd like to hear everything properly."

"I haven't started yet," said the Black Beetle.

"You see, Willy?" called Michel Domsch. "We can't understand a word, and perhaps it was something important."

"Come into the middle of the room!" someone called loudly.

There was only one place to stand, in the middle of the room – before or behind the stove.

The Black Beetle took up his position in front of the stove. Behind him the smoke began to belch out of all the cracks in the oven plate and out of the oven hole.

Felix winked across to Michel Domsch: "I get it." The quarry foreman too had got it. He was used to expressing himself in biblical phraseology. Now he thought, If Thou art the Son of God, save Thyself. The Labour Front Area Pep Talker noticed nothing, and began to speak. The lanky canteen manager, who had a voice as smooth as salad-cream, put in the request, "Talk Sorbian, will you, Willy. We'd like to follow all of it, y'know."

Others repeated the request, less gently but giving the same reason.

The effort of rapid thinking and speech soon had the Black Beetle sweating. To think the louts placed so much importance on his words! But to speak in Sorbian was forbidden, or rather undesirable. Perhaps here it was all right for the sake of the cause. And I've got smoker's cough again, he thought, and cleared his throat thoroughly.

The men regarded him with friendly eyes. Only the crooked-nosed Lorenz, who was already a Storm Trooper, looked angry. The Area Pep Talker decided to give his address in Sorbian.

He stumbled over his first sentences. He had learnt his speech in German, and in Sorbian he knew only the workers' lingo and what he had to say could not be confined to slang. He stammered. They laughed. His face grew red. And that damned coughing was agonizing. The smoke crept around him and spread through the canteen. The men were puffing away at their pipes.

"The stove is smoking," said the Black Beetle.

The hooter-man tore open the oven door and poked about impatiently among the coals. The smoke thickened. "It's still smoking, Willy," declared the hooter-man, "but not much."

The Black Beetle could no longer quite make out the faces in the last two rows of benches.

"Carry on, Willy!" some of the men cried.

"Get the windows or the door open," he asked. The foreman was sitting by the door. He remained tight in his seat. Behind him Lorenz started to open the window.

"Are you mad!" shouted Michel Domsch. "First we sweat on the job like apes and now you want to have us sitting in the draught?"

They all joined the protest. The crooked-nosed Lorenz pushed himself out of his row and left. He banged the door so hard that the empty mugs on the rough tables rattled.

"And he's supposed to be a Storm Trooper," said the foreman, with a sardonic smile.

"But if the stove is really smoking as strongly as you say," grumbled Bensch the mason, "then why on earth do we have the Labour Front?"

The noise from the men showed their agreement.

The Black Beetle felt like a slice of bacon being cured. His eyes seemed to be oozing out of his head, taking his brains with them.

"And you're a big noise now in the Labour Front," continued Bensch the mason. "If the stove smokes that badly – we're used to it – then it's up to the Labour Front to see that it's altered."

"That's right – it's a job for the Labour Front," the men bellowed.

Felix Hanusch joined in the bellowing. The Black Beetle could only gabble, "The Labour Front . . ."

At that the hooter-man fell down.

"Smoke-poisoning!" cried the men, and rushed up to carry the hooter-man into the fresh air. It took five of them to carry him while fifty more pushed their way outside to give advice to those trying to revive him.

As soon as he saw the chance the quarry foreman slipped out. The Black Beetle was staring helplessly at the blobs of smoke billowing out of the oven door. About ten men stood round him, all speaking at once.

"If you're still our old pal, Willy, then you'll set to with both hands on the Labour Front and get them to fix our stove."

They encircled him and pushed him forward until they reached the small window of the canteen. Bensch the mason ordered brandies. They drank a toast to the Black Beetle. "Your health, Willy! To our noble benefactor!"

Then they clapped him on the shoulder, sincerely but none the less roughly, and left him alone so that he could pay the bill in peace.

OTTO GOTSCHE

who wrote

Buchenwald

was born in 1904 in Eisleben, the son of a miner. He was a plumber by trade, a socialist at fourteen, was imprisoned for political activity at eighteen, again at twenty-one, worked in the 1920's on left-wing papers and as a Communist Party official. In 1927 he visited the U.S.S.R. He was arrested by the Nazis in 1933 and sent to Sonnenburg Concentration Camp . . . Upon his release in 1934, he engaged in Communist underground work, continuing this throughout the Nazi years. In 1940, he helped organise the Anti-fascist Middle German Workers' Group. He has held a number of government posts since 1948. In 1960 he became State Council Secretary. He has written four novels on German revolutionary history from 1918 up to the land reform in the German Democratic Republic.

When the shadow of Fascism descended upon Germany the Nazis built Buchenwald Concentration Camp amongst the beech-woods on the Ettersberg. It will go down in history as one of the death-traps in which thousands of our bravest patriots and tens of thousands of people, uprooted from their homes in every country in Europe, were tortured, murdered, beaten to death, gassed, burnt or torn to pieces by savage dogs.

"To Each His Own" was the wrought-iron motto over the gateway into Buchenwald Camp. Leopoldi, the Viennese composer, saw that sign in 1938 as he was driven through the gate on to the parade-ground with a group of fellow-sufferers. He also saw the block to which prisoners were strapped down when they were beaten.

"To Each His Own" meant hunger, hard labour in the stone quarries, torture without mercy, and death.

Leopoldi was a Jew who could not hope to survive for more than a few weeks. But Robert Siewert, Prisoner Number 5044, Communist and fighter, one of the men who risked their lives a thousand times to save other comrades, found a way to rescue him from the death commando which would otherwise have been his fate: Siewert smuggled him into the brick-layers' gang and taught him how to use a trowel.

The best of our own people and of the enslaved peoples of Europe languished in the Nazi concentration camps, but did not abandon their faith in life or their hopes of salvation; and the songs they sang proclaimed their courage and belief in the future. But no song had yet been sung in Buchenwald. . . .

That year camp commandant Roedel ordered the prisoners to produce a camp song. He gave them two days.

And in those two days the man who wrote Lehar's librettos wrote the text of the Buchenwald Song, and Leopoldi composed the music. After that the prisoners began rehearsing it.

Roedel, that blood-stained camp tyrant, ordered some of the prisoners out to sing it.

And their song rose up over the parade-ground, behind the charged barbed-wire fence, sustained and mournful:

O Buchenwald, I'll remember you forever,
To you my fate has called me.
Who knows you not can never sense or measure
How wonderful free life can be!

Roedel found fault with the rhythm.

"You idiots! It's supposed to be a march!" he shouted, and began strutting up and down waving his arms to mark the rhythm he wanted, mocking all the hopes and longings which the singing prisoners and the composer had put into the melody.

He could never be allowed to find out that a Jewish composer had written the music, for that would have meant certain death for Leopoldi and cruel torture for Siewert and his comrades.

That was how the Buchenwald Song was born.

With help from abroad, the well-known song-writer Leopoldi obtained his release from Buchenwald before the war started. He was put across the frontier. But tens of thousands had to suffer the horrors of the concentration camp right to the bitter end. Those who remained heard no more about him and believed him to be dead.

*

Robert Siewert to whose comradely help so many owe their lives, travelled to Vienna in 1948 with a group of German resistance fighters – amongst them Rosa Thaelmann – to attend a meeting of Austrian concentration camp veterans.

French, Polish, Russian, Czech, Dutch and German concentration camp veterans had a joyous reunion there. One evening Siewert's Austrian friends, Karl Dirrmayer and Maxl Umschweig, took him to a night-club. It was a splendid place, crowded with well-dressed men and women in evening dresses. Smooth, soft music sounded from the stage at one end of the long room. But the atmosphere made Siewert uncomfortable, for he had grown hard in prison and had seen too many people die. And perhaps his own soul had also died too often within him. He felt suffocated and wanted to leave.

But then a remarkable thing happened. The music from the stage died down slowly to a subdued murmur. And

out of the dying notes the Buchenwald Song emerged – first faintly, then increasing in volume until it swelled into hammering cords.

There was a sudden hush. Everybody in the room sensed that something extraordinary was happening.

The conductor swung round to the front of the stage.

"Ladies and Gentlemen! You will be surprised to know that you have just heard the Buchenwald Concentration Camp Song. Forgive me. I had to play it. The man who saved my life has just come in."

Leopoldi leapt down from the stage, rushed over to Siewert, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

A murmur spread through the room, followed by a burst of applause. Siewert was suddenly surrounded by a crowd of friends and strangers. And there were tears in the eyes of the man who had been hardened by the sight of so many of his friends dying.

WILLI BREDEL

who wrote

The Old Cripple

was born in the city of Hamburg in 1901, and worked in the port's dockyards as a youth. He joined the Communist Party soon after it was founded. A seaman in 1920, he later took up journalism. He was sent to concentration camp in 1933, but he was released a year later and fled to Czechoslovakia and to the Soviet-Union. Between 1937 and 1939 he fought in Spain with the International Brigades and then returned to the U.S.S.R. and joined the "Free Germany" Committee in 1941. He won a Soviet medal in the Battle of Stalingrad. Back in Germany in 1945, he took over important civic posts and edited literary journals. He has written many historical books as well as tales of working-class life in the twentieth century, and stories of Spain and of the Nazis. He holds two National Prizes.

Tell us again how you lost your leg, Matthias!"

The SS man winked slily at his comrades, for everybody who did guard duty here knew at least three versions of how Matthias had lost his leg – one more fantastic than the other.

In one of them, the dock watchman, Matthias Stoewer, claimed he had lost his leg during a daring attack at the mouth of the Thames.

"A twenty-eight centimetre grenade swept over our deck and tore off my left leg without doing any other damage."

On other occasions he said he had suddenly heard an explosion during a battle with numerous British cruisers off Helgoland.

"Direct hit in our gun-tower. That was a mess, I can tell you! I took a look round – everybody dead! There was I, the gun-layer, I loaded, took aim and fired – and only noticed afterwards that my left leg was shot to pieces. You can just imagine how I felt."

But almost in the same breath, he also claimed that it had happened in the Skagerrak.

"There was the ship shot to pieces and burning. Me lying stunned on deck. Everything in darkness. When I came round I was in the naval hospital in Wilhelmshaven. My left leg had simply been burned off. The panzer plates I'd been lying on were red-hot."

The SS guards roared with laughter when the old seaman, who was now getting a bit fat, spun one of these yarns. Their guard duty near Finkenwerder was easy, but terribly monotonous. When their commanding officer drove into town and stayed the night they could get a couple of girls on board, otherwise there was nothing to do in the evenings except talk and play cards.

They sat on the forecastle with their legs dangling over the railing and stared up into the evening sky at the stars which stood silent and remote from all earthly confusion.

Matthias Stoewer crouched down on a winch coil with his wooden leg sticking out in front of him. He puffed at his curved pipe, but was noticeably silent and preoccupied that evening – not like himself at all. Everybody knew that his son Paul was overdue with his U-boat. The old man, who was nearing sixty, had been to sea himself for more than ten years, but in his eyes submarines were inventions of the devil, not boats, and he would not have set foot on one of those under-water contraptions for anything in the world. And now what he had always

worried about had really happened – his son Paul lay shut up in that armoured boat at the bottom of the ocean.

"What's up, Matthias?" someone demanded impatiently. "Don't keep us all here with our tongues hanging out."

"Yes, if I remember rightly," somebody else began to tease him, "you once said it wasn't an English grenade but a shark that gobbled up your leg."

Matthias nodded.

"Yes, you're right there. It was a shark."

Everybody roared with laughter again. The old boy had swallowed the bait.

"Come on, tell us about it!"

They were itching to hear the latest tall story.

"Well, boys," the old man began, deadly serious this time. "I will tell you what really did happen when I lost my leg."

The way he spoke surprised them and held their attention as well.

Matthias Stoewer knocked out his pipe, filled it leisurely from an SS man's pouch, as a sort of first instalment in payment for his story, lit it and while he was getting it to draw, began:

"Well, it was in the summer of '15 . . . some way away from here, in Swinemuende docks . . ."

"So you lost your leg in Swinemuende docks?" somebody asked, and they all laughed.

The old man raised his big, powerful head, looked at them, and went on, "Yes, I lost my leg in Swinemuende."

"And a shark took it?"

There was more laughter and somebody shouted:

"Let him tell it, can't you?"

"Yes, it was a shark," said Matthias in an unusually serious tone, and went on without a trace of a smile. "When I was called up I had a girl who was in service in Swinemuende. I was engaged to her. Her name was Martha and she was pretty, bursting with health and always ready for a bit of fun. You can guess how pleased

I was when our ship, the *Frauenlob*, actually docked in Swinemuende. After I'd been without her for so long I had a real feast again. We were together every evening. And whenever I was on deck duty I used to smuggle her on to the boat."

He paused for a moment, drew at his pipe, blew the smoke out thoughtfully in front of him, then went on, almost casually, as if he were telling the story about someone else:

"But one day it was all over. She didn't come. She wasn't at home, either. And I couldn't find her anywhere the next day."

"I thought you were going to tell us about how you lost your leg?"

"All right, all right," the old man answered. "This is all part of it. Well, I knew there was something behind it. I needn't tell you what I felt like. I'll only say I was fond of that girl. We had already decided to get married soon. And then this happened. I just couldn't understand it. But I found out from a pal what had happened. A warrant officer on our ship had managed to turn her head and get her away from me."

Matthias puffed hard at his pipe.

"Well, in the end I was able to get Martha to myself for a few minutes. We met on the Swinemuende mole. I tried to make her understand that she was only looking for trouble, because an officer – and this one was a specially superior sort of chap – would never marry her. While I was talking to her the officer came up. He must have been watching us. I saluted. He ordered me to go away. I was almost out of my mind, sort of stunned, and I didn't move. And then – of course, I shouldn't have done it, he was an officer, after all – I grabbed him by the throat. He drew his revolver and shot at me. I felt a sharp pain in my thigh. He struck me in the face and I fell off the mole dam on to the rocks on the water's edge below. The shot and my fall did for me. They couldn't save my leg and there

I was, a cripple because of this chap. So he was a sort of shark after all, wasn't he?"

The old man stared in front of him and puffed away absent-mindedly at his pipe.

"You hit him first," said one of the SS men.

The old man nodded.

"And you were listed as a war cripple, weren't you?" somebody asked.

"Yes, they wanted to hush up the whole thing."

"And what happened to the girl?"

The old man drew hard at his pipe and then said:

"It was all over between them in about three weeks. She wrote me a lot of letters after that, begging me to forgive her. I didn't answer. Then I lost touch with her altogether. Well, that's how it was. That's how I lost my girl and my leg as well."

"Joachim!" somebody called out. "Wasn't your father on the *Frauenlob*? You might ask him sometime if he knows anything about this love affair."

The old man looked up quickly.

"Joachim'll have to wait a long time, his father's in Buenos Aires," said someone else.

Matthias turned to the young man called Joachim.

"Was your father on the *Frauenlob*?"

"Yes."

"Officer?"

"Yes, second officer."

"Second officer," the old man repeated, lost in thought.

"Aha! a sailor's knot is coming untied!"

"Not likely!" said the old man.

"Well, what was the name of the officer who stole your girl?"

The SS man Joachim got up.

"No, no! You stay where you are!" the others said.

Matthias peered at the young man, drawing hard at his pipe.

"Well, what was your rival's name, old boy?"

"Hans Mueller."

The SS men were obviously disappointed.

"Then it can't have been Joachim's father."

SS man Joachim smiled and sat down again.

"I believe Matthias has told us the true story for the first time," somebody remarked.

The harbour watchman got up and went off on his round. At the gang-plank he asked one of the guards what Joachim's family name was.

"Joachim . . . Wait a bit. Yes, his name's von Krekel."

It was already dark, so that the SS guard could not see Matthias' face.

The next day, when Matthias went up to his attic room, there was a letter from the Admiralty lying on his table. The old cripple turned deathly pale. So now it was absolutely certain. He would never see Paul again. Never . . . He stood there quite still for a long time . . . A choking rage welled up inside him. That rascal was sitting safe and sound in Buenos Aires, and his son had got a soft job with the harbour guards. It was always the same, everywhere, those who had to sacrifice their happiness and their lives for scoundrels like that were always poor chaps – like himself, he thought. The Fuehrer could say what he liked, nothing was fairer in this war than in the last. The officer's son was an SS man and didn't have to go off to the war, he could stay here and guard ships . . . The devil take the lot of them . . .

The old man limped back and forth in his little room with the letter in his hand . . . People like us always get the worst of everything, and nothing happens to the fine gents, he thought. It's the same all the time and everywhere . . . His broad shoulders sagged as if he were carrying a heavy load.

Then he rushed out of his room and clattered down the steep stairs.

"My son is dead!" he called out to the woman next door, and showed her the letter.

Out in the street he tore open the door of the greengrocer's shop and shouted to Petersen, "My son is dead!"

He held up the letter in his hand and hurried on before the greengrocer had time to answer.

At the bridge he met the policeman, Otto Bennlein, whom he had known for years.

"My son is dead!" he called out to him as he limped along.

He had no other friends, but he felt an urge to tell everyone he met that his son was dead. And he showed them the letter from the Admiralty. He wandered about all day long until at last, towards evening, he limped down to the docks, tired and desperately unhappy, to go on duty again.

Hamburg had its sensation the next morning. The steamer *Freya*, which was loaded with ammunition and war supplies, had caught fire in the night. They had had to sink the ship to prevent an explosion, which might have had terrible results.

Two men lost their lives in the catastrophe – the one-legged harbour watchman Matthias Stoewer and an SS man from the harbour guards, Joachim von Krekel.

ARNOLD ZWEIG

who wrote

Return of the Gas-Mask

is the distinguished novelist, essayist and playwright. Mr. Zweig was born in Silesia in 1887. He studied history of art, philosophy and German literature and, later on, economics and sociology. In the 1920's he edited a Jewish literary paper in Berlin. Forced to leave Germany in 1933, he travelled through Europe to Israel, and there helped to found the Victory League, which supported the Red Army after the Nazi invasion. After returning to Germany he was for some time president of the Academy of Arts and was also president of the German PEN Club. He is a prolific writer whose novels include the famous "Case of Sergeant Grisha" and "The Axe of Wandsbeck". A collection of his short stories, "A Bit of Blood", has appeared in the Seven Seas Books series. In 1951 he won the National Prize, and in 1958 the Lenin Peace Prize.

It happened on one of those days long ago before any bombs had fallen on London and when a few Europeans still hoped to hold off the great disaster by offering up a few smaller countries. Henry Brown was startled out of his first sleep by a knock at the door. He had gone to bed early, exhausted by the days of a political crisis which had suddenly appeared threateningly, like a water-hose, over

Europe. In the streets of London, in its shops and offices, people had felt this all too plainly. And his host now told him, shaking his head apologetically, that he would have to get up and try on a gas-mask.

It was September 1938. Nobody had any right to complain at being called out again on business at about eleven o'clock at night, especially for his own good. Two girls in brown overalls cut like uniforms and a tall young man with a friendly smile were waiting in the living-room. The guest, forty-five years old, of medium height, wearing a grey dressing-gown over his pyjamas, had hardly understood what it was all about before he found himself sitting in a chair and breathing through a gas-mask. One girl pressed a sheet of cardboard against the air filter, the mask at once shrivelled up against his face, pumped empty, deflated like a burst balloon. The other girl nodded, satisfied. The mask sat right, had no holes and even his spectacles did not get in the way. The fair young man politely handed him the mask and said cheerfully:

"Nothing to pay, sir."

Back in his room, Henry put the gas-mask on the mantelpiece. For a moment his knees went limp and he sat down heavily on the end of the bed. There it stood. It had come back again after twenty years – grey, rubberised, with big transparent shields for the eyes, very practical. His heart thumped slowly and heavily. For all he cared the thing could have stayed with the devil. He hadn't asked for it.

He lay down again, turned out the light and tried to sleep. But it was impossible. Before his closed eyes he saw his last trench with the brown tent-square in front of the entrance. He was lying on a straw sack again, one of a million soldiers, in his heavy boots, puttees and breeches, stiff with Flanders clay. The dull rattling of his bedroom window when the wind struck the frame reminded him of the heavy roll of drumfire about two miles away. It was unbearable.

He got up. The electric light flooded his quietly

furnished room. He dressed, took his hat and raincoat and went out. The street lay empty under the glare of the lamps, and the September wind played with the leaves which fell from the elms like empty cartridge cases falling from a gun-barrel.

His hands deep in his pockets, he marched across to a main thoroughfare, turned off into the first side street and hastened his step. He did not even notice that it was the wrong turning. London seemed to have altered around him in any case. The sharp gables of the Hampstead houses hardly looked like English houses, but more like those of Northern France – Amiens or one of the little towns in that neighbourhood.

Cold anger shook him. It had all been quite useless. Millions of dead . . . all that suffering, all the drudgery, the tremendous effort, the bitterness of that blind, senseless carnage. People had not learnt anything. Judgment, foresight – these were unattainable, a luxury. The rushing through a hail of bullets, throwing oneself down, jumping up again, thrusting bayonets into men's bellies, soft and unresisting, the dashing back, the trembling and gasping in bomb-holes, the wild hurling of hand-grenades at the last moment – all that had been to no purpose. They had come again, the Germans, even their steel helmets. Just like in 1914. The best part of his adult life was wiped out. Europe was again like a freight-car – for forty-eight men or six horses.

The street ended in an open square with grass and trees. He knew now where he was. By the light of an arc lamp he could see a group of men digging. They were digging a trench. Three of the old trees which he had loved already lay on the ground. In their place the narrow steel barrel of a flak gun pointed up to the clouds, threatening and searching, like a boy's air gun aiming at sparrows. The "sparrows" were not there yet, but they would come. There would be no lack of them.

Brown stopped beside the digging men, in the middle

of the arc of light, so that they would not think he was spying. The diggers were obviously in a good mood; they had probably been out of work for some time. His hands in his pockets, he looked at them and wondered how all this could have happened again. Hadn't it been properly buried on November 11, 1918, at eleven o'clock in the morning? Hadn't they stuck their bayonets in the ground, spat and called out:

"At last!"

He felt in his pocket for his pipe, turned without thinking away from the wind, pulled his hat down over his face and lit it. It was still half full of good English tobacco.

Up there on the Clyde he had a young wife whom he loved, and two small daughters. That was a good thing, he thought. If things started again he would at least know why he had a gun in his hand and why he was carrying hand-grenades. But must it start again? Why the devil should it? Just because those bastards across the North Sea could never get enough land and power and people under them? He didn't want power. He loved his family, his work, his life, even the postage stamps which he was collecting for his two little girls, Lily and Ruth. But behind him, in his bedroom, the gas-mask lurked on the mantelpiece and grinned at him and his ineffectual wishes through its big glass eyes. It was a nightmare, a skull, a werwolf, which dug for corpses with its pig's snout. Its mouth ought to be stopped up with curses and earth. He saw it in front of him as if it filled the whole sky, which was the same dark grey, with a palely gleaming cloud instead of the glass panel.

It wasn't his fault that things had happened like this. He was a victim of the people who made a business out of politics, just as he made a business of selling paper, he thought. The only difference was that they understood less about their business than he did about selling paper, otherwise they would not have permitted London to face the crisis so miserably unprepared.

As he stood there, leaning against a tree-trunk, which he could feel between his shoulder-blades like a second backbone, he was gradually possessed by an idea which rose out of that part of his body – the waist – where he had once carried a cartridge belt. The idea rose quietly up to his throat, made him gulp and left a bitter taste in his mouth, and pressed against his skull from the inside.

No, no!

He did not want to admit it, but it remained true, this idea which whispered that it was also his fault, without any doubt and quite clearly.

He had no right to complain; he ought not to have left the dirty game they called politics so freely to the others. But he had not bothered, he had forgotten his experiences, had accepted the views of certain old men about the course of events in the world. They had gone on believing that they had to deal with decent German Republicans, they had not noticed, or did not want to notice, that the world conquerors – those of 1917 and 1918 – had come back. They were marching in rank and file across the Republic they had trampled underfoot and were drilling it for war. November 11th lay far ahead in the future, and it was still a long way to Tipperary, if any time remained for telling Hitler the truth and for defending the air and liberty across the Channel. . . .

One of the workers threw down his spade and wiped the sweat off his face. Brown went up to him, took off his coat and said, as if to an exhausted comrade in the trenches:

"It's my turn now, let me have a go."

The worker looked at him in astonishment, laughed shortly, nodded, coughed and retreated into the darkness. Henry dug the spade into the ground with a will. All the muscles in his body suddenly remembered this movement. And as he dug he knew that from now on he would look into the doings of all the fine people, all the appeasers and hushers-up of the truth, just as carefully and with the

same distrust as he now looked at the earth which he was throwing up:

As if the enemy already lay beneath it.

Let the gas-mask on his mantelpiece grin! He had wakened up – to the good, to reality, to recognition of the hour which had just struck – twelve o'clock.

Now he could go home again and sleep.

WALTER GORRISH

who wrote

Wolves

was born in Wuppertal in the Ruhr region in 1909. He entered the Communist Party at twenty-two. When the Nazis took power, he fled Germany. He wandered over Europe and went to Spain to join the International Brigades as an officer. The French police turned him over to the Nazis in 1940, and he was sentenced to prison and concentration camp for treason. Three years later, he was forced into the notorious "Death Battalion" but deserted to the Red Army. Since 1945 he has lived in Berlin. An exciting book written in 1940, called "For Spain's Freedom", a tale of the transformation of a Spanish peasant into an officer in the Republican Army, and "The Sounding Track", the story of a young German in a French internment camp, are two of his best-known works. He has also written a play and several excellent film scenarios.

A beast rose out of the mire,
Its name was Man.
To be a man
Shake off the mire.

The woman's life seeped away like a stream after a long drought. As she lay in bed she could see a Soviet woman prisoner trimming the mortar off old bricks in front of

a bombed factory gateway. The rubble piled up behind her sheltered her a little from the wind as it drove the powdered snow before it.

The girl reached hesitantly for another brick, and it fell from her hands, for they were crippled with cold.

She has no gloves, the dying woman thought. And this discovery filled her with an irresistible, greedy longing, like someone who has been hungry for a long time and at last has a chance to eat his fill. The hectic flush on her high cheek-bones turned to a bright purple.

She began to dress, avoiding any unnecessary effort. When she was ready she went over to her wardrobe and took out a pair of mittens. They had belonged to her son Willi, who had been killed at eighteen in a tank battle in the East. He had played at a concert the last time he was home on leave and the papers had said that he was a promising violinist. Remembering this, she stood there stroking the soft wool for a few seconds. Then she left the flat and went carefully down the stairs.

The wind in the street cut off her breath like glass. It swelled her sick lungs, pricking painfully. Just as she came up to the girl she passed a well-dressed old gentleman in a heavy hunting jacket. Pinned on to it she saw the Iron Cross First Class medal which he must have won in the First World War. His sharp little eyes at once saw the package she was carrying.

"Another step and you'd have run into the Russian," he said.

The woman felt the threat in his voice like the touch of something immeasurably ugly, but she did her best, despite her rattling breathing, to set her face in a friendly smile. She sought hastily for a suitable reply. But when she opened her mouth only a barking cough came out.

"You'd be better in bed in this weather," said the old gentleman affably. He glanced thoughtfully at her frail body and stumped heavily away.

The woman walked past the Russian girl and stopped

in front of a small general store. She stood there like a thin stake in the driving snow. The whirling flakes gently smoothed away her pain and weariness. She glanced eagerly down the street. All the softness had vanished from her eyes and they were as sharply bright as the ice which stuck to the shop window like needle-pointed grains. She waited for a few people to go past and at last the street was empty. She hurried back to the girl. She saw her young face, blue with cold.

"Take them!" she said.

She was just straightening up to move away when a voice behind her held her transfixed.

"We can use things like that ourselves," said the old gentleman, snatching the gloves out of the girl's hand.

He grabbed the sick woman roughly by the scruff of the neck.

"The best thing for you is to come along with me to the police station," he said cheerfully.

He shoved her along in front of him. They reached their destination afer crossing a few streets. The woman staggered up the few steps to the smoke-filled guardroom. The police officer on duty looked up at them surlily.

"Helping the enemy," the old gentleman reported, with a jerk of his head at the woman. He flung the mittens down in front of the policeman.

"Aha!" the officer said, staring a her. "How did you get that idea into your head?"

But she stood there, unapproachable, as if turned to stone. The principles of arbitrary action were no longer real to her. She was a shadow. Find out, if you can, she thought, with sovereign superiority.

"Well, you can think it over until tomorrow!" said the policeman, grinning broadly, and gave one of his men an order.

They took the woman away to a cell. She sat down, shivering, on the cold frame of the plank bed. The minutes gathered into slowly dragging hours. Frosty shudders

chased down her back at short intervals. She sat for a long time on the edge of the bed.

Then a hard thrust in her chest forced her bent body upright. The life blood gushed out of her mouth in an irresistible flood and clad her freezing body in a warm red cloak. She got up and walked lightly out to the girl in the snow.

Tossed between dreaming and waking, the woman tore a strip off the bed-sheet and knotted one end of it into a sling. She flung this improvised rope through the bars above her. Another rush of blood set her mind gently swaying. Barely conscious of the ground beneath her feet, she now stood in front of the girl. She leant forward to give her the gloves. Her head struck against the wall of the cell.

"Those wolves!" she screamed.

Then she put her head in the sling.

Interlude

Journey in a Blue Swan
BODO UHSE

The Young Censor
ALFRED KURELLA

The Old Woman and the Eagle
ALEX WEDDING

The Shareholders' Meeting
LUDWIG RENN

BODO UHSE

who wrote

Journey in a Blue Swan

was born in Rastatt in 1904, the son of a Prussian officer. While in his twenties, he broke with family tradition and joined the Communist Party. He fled to Paris in 1933 and went to Spain in 1936. For two years, he fought with the International Brigades, afterwards going to Mexico. He returned to Germany in 1948 and for some time was editor of a literary magazine. He worked with the League of Culture and was chairman of the Writers' Union. He was a member of the Academy of Arts until his death in 1963. His novel, "Lieutenant Bertram", first printed in English in 1944 and in German in 1947, was a Seven Seas Books selection in 1961.... "The Patriots", the first of an epic novel on the German resistance movement, appeared in 1954. The National Prize was awarded him that same year for this work.

I haven't found anyone to carry the coffin," said Sanchez Christobal, without looking up from the stamped earthen floor. Miguel nodded to the man as he stood, pleading yet threatening, in the doorway.

"You're a stranger here," Miguel said.

"I've lived in the village with you for seven years," said the other man reproachfully.

Yes, but you've already murdered three men, thought Miguel. He did not say this aloud. Nobody in the village had so far dared to do that.

"I suppose I shall have to carry my child's coffin myself in the end," said Sanchez Christobal with an unpleasant laugh. It was Miguel who looked down this time.

"A disgrace!" the man said loudly, stretching himself until he quite filled the doorway.

Miguel felt it growing darker in the hut. And he did not dare to look up again.

"Yes," said Sanchez Christobal, as he came in. "That's what it is, isn't it? People will say, he hasn't even a friend to carry his dead son to the graveyard for him."

He threw his cigarette out through the open door into the street, where a hen picked at it.

"It's all the same to me," he said, in his usual husky voice. "I don't care what people say. But Carmela – it'll break Carmela's heart!"

This sounded more like a challenge than an appeal. Looking up at his visitor, Miguel caught a baleful gleam in the dark eyes, a foreboding of something evil. He understood at once what Sanchez Christobal was thinking about and he was terrified.

However, he promised to carry the coffin – as if it were a matter of course and there could be no question of anything else. As soon as Carmela's name was mentioned he was no longer his own master; he was lost, delivered up to a painfully sweet sensation which poured through him – through his heart and head and limbs. It hurt him to hear that she was suffering. It intoxicated him to know that he could help her.

"I'll do it for her sake," he said without shame.

After Sanchez Christobal had left Miguel sat down cross-legged on his straw mat and thought of the day which both he and Sanchez Christobal were remembering as they looked into each other's eyes.

*

They had set out just as the bitter green light of the morning lit up the mountains in the distance before them. They had a long way to go. After three dusty hours of walking they were still only half way to their destination. Their naked feet shuffled through the hot, grainy sand. The sun weighed heavy on their shoulders. The path snaked timidly through the wilderness of cacti across the dry plateau. Nothing else flourished in this desert – but how lush and in what variety the cacti grew! Thick pillared walls towered solemnly up to the painfully bright sky, the strength of centuries was concentrated in the exuberant stumps which stood around like fat drunken men, broad carpets spread geometrical patterns over the sand, green snake bodies slithered across the narrow foot-path. Blood-red, yellow and silky white blossoms spread their petals temptingly all around, but alongside them thousands of different kinds of thorns poked out of leathery green skin. The thorns were often so fine that they spread out like shimmering gold cloth over the body of the plant. Others had big, needle-shaped points, and there were some even more powerful that curved like swords. All this protruded challengingly in embittered defence of a vital juice so hardly won against the thirst of man and beast.

Yes, it was hot and there was nothing to be seen far and wide except these walls of thorns, straight and bent, stiff and flexible, with arrow-heads and barbed hooks. And these, not content with defence alone, pushed forward into their path as they walked past, tearing their white, faded, worn clothing, or even scratching bloody marks in their bare arms. The thorns' enmity was pitiless, inspiring fear in this summer heat.

Miguel, who walked at the end of the row, had hardly enough spittle left to lick his thumb for drawing the thread through the spindle. He spun as he walked, like the women in front of him – Petra and Concha, his sisters, and Carmela farther ahead; all he saw of her was an occasional glimpse of her pink heels when the path climbed. But

Sanchez Christobal, Carmela's husband, marched ahead of them all. He had a sinister look. His skin was very dark and his hair, cut straight across his forehead, was black and damp with sweat and clung to his head like pitch. His eyes shone black as night.

Whenever Sanchez Christobal stopped and stretched himself – although he had the least need to do so, since he carried no load – they all stopped; when he marched on again they all trotted along behind him, Carmela and the two sisters and Miguel in the rear.

At first they had talked, Sanchez Christobal had smoked and the sisters had told funny stories. Only Miguel had been silent and the glance from his velvet eyes had lain like a veil on Carmela's face.

The dust swirled up from under their feet and the strong sun made them keep their heads down. A tree-trunk bridged the deep-cut, dry bed of a stream. A stony cliff rose up on the opposite bank. The path curved upward and Miguel could see Carmela's face from the side. Her bronze profile stood out sharply against the burning sky. The grooves in her temples had a bluish sheen. As she walked along a little above him, Miguel sensed the ripeness and dignity of her being and was overcome by rapture, so that he suddenly uttered a clear, joyous shout.

He had had similar feelings before at the sight of her. The first time had been about three years earlier, at a festival in a neighbouring village. That time, too, he had quite unexpectedly and without any heralding or presentiment, been overcome with frightening intensity by a feeling which he could not put into words – he could not even have explained it to himself in thought. He longed for her, he was driven to her. In the depths of his being arose an intuitive flame of knowledge that for him fulfilment, happiness, love, full existence in this world, lay only in her.

It had been like that three years before, amongst shooting galleries and dice-throwing stands, music and the noise

of drunkards. He had had the same feeling whenever he saw her.

But he had never surrendered to the impulse. He had been afraid of it, had run away from it. When Carmela married the stranger, this Sanchez Christobal – of whom nobody knew anything, where he came from or what he did for a living – he had let it happen, dumb and full of helpless horror. He did not speak about it and it was difficult to guess what was in his mind. Now Carmela had a child from Sanchez Christobal and she walked obediently behind him on the way to the market in Ixmiquilpan, pottery vessels on her back and the child in a cloth at her breast.

Miguel looked up at Carmela, felt her magic and was ashamed of his lack of action.

Then they came out on the broad, white road. Sanchez Christobal glanced contemptuously at Miguel, who was turning his spindle like the women. Carmela looked round at him, too, as they came up out of the ditch into the road. Her white blouse had pale embroidery at the throat, but it was torn and her red skin and part of her already tired breasts shone through the holes here and there. She sprang up with an almost gay movement on to the road, laughing as the soles of her bare feet touched the hot asphalt. She laughed at her husband's sullen face, too, although she knew it so well. She turned her spindle and spun her thread and walked along with even steps.

As they crossed the road a car dashed past like a shining arrow. The women screamed and they all scattered, even the gloomy Sanchez Christobal. But he soon recovered his dignity as they turned off on the other side of the road to Ixmiquilpan. He marched on proudly and sullenly ahead of the women. Miguel followed them, shy and enraptured.

The market had attracted many people, so that the big square was already full when they arrived. Miguel and the women found places for themselves in a lane near the

square, Carmela on the one side, Miguel and his sisters on the other. With smiling, humble eyes, Miguel looked across the lane to Carmela between the people pushing their way into the market square. She knelt down and spread out her pottery vessels, and a coloured shawl which she had woven herself, in front of her on the ground. The baby lay in a bundle in the gutter behind her.

Music and the crackling of fireworks sounded from the far end of the square. Miguel's sisters had laid out cheese and a few tunas on fleshy green leaves and were waiting for customers. Miguel himself sat between straw mats which he had stacked like pillars. He was glad to be rid of the load and had no worries; his glance hovered over Carmela.

Her pottery sold well. The tall jugs and fat, round bowls were in good demand. Buyers carefully tapped them with their knuckles to be sure they were not cracked, bargained a while and then paid up quite happily about two thirds of the price which Carmela had asked.

Sanchez Christobal ambled out of the pulqueria from time to time, counted the remaining pottery, reckoned up how many had been sold and let Carmela hand over the money. Then without taking his hands out of his pockets he pushed his way carelessly back through the double swing doors of the pulqueria, letting the sound of loud singing and guitar music emerge.

On one of his check-ups Sanchez Christobal noticed that Carmela had sold the shawl. He demanded the money. Carmela hesitated, for the shawl was her own work and she had wanted to buy a coat for the baby with the money. But Sanchez Christobal, who was already thoroughly drunk, began to curse loudly. So she quickly handed over two pesos. This seemed to him too little. She was deceiving him, he shouted, and cursed louder than before; not only the people lounging about heard him, but also Miguel on the other side of the lane. He ran over quickly and had to stand by while Sanchez Christobal, in a rage, smashed the

remaining jugs and pots with his stick, and then went back into the pulqueria. No one who had been watching had made the slightest move. If he had wanted to, Sanchez Christobal could have beaten Carmela instead of the pots – this, too, would have been merely an interesting spectacle.

So it had also been a matter of course for Miguel to keep quiet. But his heart beat faster, even after the doors of the pulqueria had swung shut behind Sanchez Christobal. Miguel watched Carmela gathering up the red-brown fragments, weeping as she did so. Her hands shook and her bent back had a look of such despondency that Miguel, before he realised what he was doing, was down on his knees, helping her to pick up the pieces. Their hands touched and Carmela raised her head. Her eyes were still wet, but her mouth smiled as she saw that it was Miguel beside her.

Carmela's hand in his, Miguel stood up and drew her along with him. He led her to the market square as if she had been his bride, and a wonderful warmth and pride spread through his whole body. His face glowed; he pushed carelessly through the people standing about. He had not been drinking, but he felt drunk. The music got louder and the crowd thicker, so that Carmela's shoulders and hips were pressed against him. The sun had dried her tears and her eyes shone clearer and purer than before. There was no longer only softness and obedience in them, but joy in life and adventure, born of the sound of the music, of the excitement of being amongst so many people, of Miguel's compellingly yearning looks and of the proud sensation of being desired. She moved in front of Miguel through the crowd surrounding the merry-go-round.

Like the earth, it turned on its own axis. It was populated by strange creatures, red goats, yellow elephants, green tigers, a giant butterfly big enough to sit upon. Radio music came from a loudspeaker. Four grubby boys and an old man with a bandage over his left eye worked the

merry-go-round. Carmela did not see them; she was looking at the animals as they circled past her and at the people riding on them, solemn-faced men and women who let themselves be driven round in circles.

Miguel sensed how she longed to go on a jolly trip like that. He took her hand – happily, but still a little hesitantly – as the leisurely course of the merry-go-round gradually slowed down and came to a stop. The passengers, who had not moved a muscle during the trip, now climbed down to firm earth again with bright, astonished faces. Carmela followed the pressure of Miguel's hand without hesitation. She did not want to get onto the yellow elephant which stopped in front of them, but pointed to a blue swan with a dignified curved neck; between its widespread wings was a seat with room for them both. They sat down in it together. As long as the merry-go-round stood still they kept their eyes down, away from the looks of the people standing about, staring and joking. But as the vehicle began to revolve slowly and the people below, the trees, the wrought-iron lions of the music pavilion and the houses behind them swayed past, happiness spread over their dark faces. They abandoned themselves to the magic flight in the blue swan, which began to circle faster and faster, so that the air rushed past their ears and the music mingled with it. They sat there hand in hand, looking into each other's eyes. They did not bother about the origin of the joyous sensation which filled them. They only knew that it flamed equally bright in them both. The journey in the blue swan led them to happiness. It was the most beautiful thing that Carmela and Miguel had ever experienced, beautiful as love itself.

As the journey came to an end, the dream broke off abruptly. Sanchez Christobal was waiting for Carmela in front of the merry-go-round. He did not say a word, but the dark fire in his eyes quenched all the joy in her. Miguel expected to be stabbed on the spot, but Sanchez Christobal was too drunk to undertake anything. Carmela and

Miguel had to lead him from the square and they had plenty of trouble with him on the long, lonely road home.

When Miguel promised to carry the child's body to the graveyard for Carmela's sake Sanchez Christobal had measured him with the same threatening look as the one given him when he got down from the merry-go-round, at the end of the journey in the blue swan.

Miguel could still feel this look when he finally went over to Sanchez Christobal's hut. He felt it as he lifted the tiny, too-light white coffin to his shoulder. He felt it as he climbed up the slope to the graveyard, for Sanchez Christobal walked behind him. Miguel could hear Carmela weeping as she stumbled along behind her husband. Behind her came Miguel's sisters, Petra and Concha. He could hear them weeping, too. And he heard people in the street saying: "Miguel is carrying the coffin."

He walked slowly, as was fitting, although his fear increased. Only when they had left the village did he dare to look back over his shoulder at Sanchez Christobal, who had his head down and was staring at the ground. But Miguel had hardly turned away before he again felt the pressure of that threatening look on his neck.

They lowered the little white coffin into the grave and lingered for a moment beside it: the sisters with Carmela, the dead child's mother, and Sanchez Christobal on the one side, and Miguel, the coffin-carrier, on the other. This time he made no mistake. This time Sanchez Christobal's look chained him. Miguel wanted to run away, but his terror was so great that he could not stir. Sanchez Christobal sprang across the open grave, seized him by the throat and lunged at him with his machete, once and a second time. The earth began to revolve around Miguel – slowly at first, then faster and faster, just as it had done on that journey in the blue swan. The air rushed passed his ears, he thought he heard the music and Carmela laughing. He crashed to the ground with a dull thud.

ALFRED KURELLA

who wrote

The Young Censor

was born in Brieg in 1895 and studied applied arts in Munich. He entered the Communist Party on its inception in 1918 and visited the young Soviet Union in 1919.... Back in Germany, he edited a Berlin left-wing periodical. His next stop was Paris, where he went in 1933. He left that city for Moscow where he worked as a literary critic and translator. He was editor of the "Free Germany" committee newspaper. Returning to Germany in 1954, he helped to found the Writers' Institute in Leipzig, and was its first director. His published works include "Mussolini Unmasked" (1931); his many translations from the French; his translations of nineteenth-century Russian revolutionary writers as well as modern Soviet authors; an autobiographical chronicle, a volume of Marxist literary criticism as well as "The Gronau Papers", a novel....

In 1898 the Bulgarian workers paraded through the streets on May Day for the first time in their history. There was trouble with the police in Sofia, and the workers, many of them still very young, put up a good defence. Bricks and bits of old iron rained down on the policemen's heads and the day ended with a number of casualties on both sides.

Amongst those who were out on parade were some workers from the big printing shop which printed the Liberal Party paper. The editor of this paper was a lawyer named Radislavoff. His customary daily editorial arrived at the printing shop in good time on May 2nd. What had happened on May Day had greatly agitated middle-class people in Sofia.

There was one peculiarity about Radislavoff's copy – it was practically impossible to read. Only two workers in the entire printing shop could decipher his handwriting – an experienced old compositor and a young fellow who had only just finished his apprenticeship. The old compositor happened to be ill on May 2nd, so the lad had to set the type for this article.

The young compositor started the job at once. But he had set only a few lines when he felt he must stop and read the manuscript through to the end. Then he folded it and went over to the foreman.

"Here, take this back. I'm not going to compose that."

The foreman was flabbergasted. Whatever had got into the lad?

"No, I'm not going to have anything to do with it," the boy exclaimed. He leafed through the manuscript and pointed to a paragraph which stated that the workers who had paraded on May Day were good-for-nothing bandits, thieves and enemies of the state, that the Government ought to take strong measures etc. etc.

The foreman talked and talked, but the young compositor refused to set the type for the editorial. He went back to his letter-cases and started on another job.

A little later Radislavoff came to the printing shop to see how things were going. The foreman told him what had happened and he went at once to the composing room.

"So you refuse to set the type for my editorial? I'll tell you what, my lad, you're my employee and I pay you. You've got to do what I tell you and not bother about the meaning of what you're doing."

"I know what my duties are," the boy answered, "but I'm not going to set the type for that article."

"Why not?"

"It's full of insults to the workers. I'll never lend my hand to things like that, and neither would any other worker."

"Well, we'll just see about that. Hand the article over to another compositor," said Radislavoff to the foreman and disappeared into the editor's office.

That's easier said than done, thought the foreman, who knew that nobody else could read the chief's writing. He tried to read it himself but couldn't make head or tail of it. In the end he gave it up and went into the office to tell Radislavoff how things stood.

The young compositor, who had been watching the proceedings with a grin, was not surprised when he was called into the editor's office shortly afterwards. Here he found the chief marching up and down with the manuscript in his hand, raging.

"Well, what's up? Why can't you compose it?"

"I've told you already. It's full of disgusting insults. The workers aren't thieves and robbers."

"Well, perhaps not all of them. You're a decent enough young chap. But they're not all like you."

"But they are," the boy insisted. "They're all like me or better. Specially those who paraded yesterday."

Radislavoff began marching up and down again. What was to be done with the lad? Suddenly he turned round.

"Well, which are the parts you don't like?"

The compositor showed him the sentences which had made him so angry and Radislavoff took out a red pencil.

"All right," he said with a sigh, "we'll cross them out."

On May 3rd 1898 a moderate article on the May Day parade appeared in Sofia's liberal newspaper.

Seventeen years later the First World War was in full swing. In Bulgaria, as in all the countries which were at

war, the Government had introduced a military censorship. The revolutionary workers' party, the so-called Narrow Socialists, were in opposition. In parliament they had just registered an objection to the censorship because it was being used in a prejudiced way against the working class press.

At that time the Bulgarian Prime Minister was none other than the former lawyer Radislavoff. But the young compositor of 1898 was now a Member of Parliament, elected by the revolutionary Socialists. And he was the man they had chosen to speak on the objection to the censorship.

The young member was just getting into his stride when suddenly, behind him, the Prime Minister got up and interrupted him.

"What! You of all people object to the censorship? Have you forgotten how you censored my article in the printing shop seventeen years ago?"

The speaker had his answer ready.

"Yes, at that time I censored your article because it was against the workers. I'm against your censorship now for the very same reason – because it's being used against the workers!"

The name of the compositor who became a member of the Bulgarian Parliament in 1915 was – Georgi Dimitroff. He told me this story in Moscow in the summer of 1934.

ALEX WEDDING

who wrote

The Old Woman and the Eagle

is the Grete to whom the late Czech-German writer, F. C. Weiskopf, dedicated his books. An author in her own right (she was awarded a Goethe Prize in 1956) she was her husband's co-worker and co-traveller. Together they fled the Nazis – first to Paris and then to America where they were detained on Ellis Island as Communist aliens. A second trip after the war took them straight to Washington, D.C., where her husband was Czech Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary to the U.S.A. Following further diplomatic duty in Sweden and China they moved to Berlin where her husband died in 1955. Alex Wedding is a highly popular author of books for young people. The fairy-tale in this volume is from her newest book, "Hubert the Hippopotamus", a story of Africa, written by her after her journey to that continent.

Once upon a time an eagle in flight came upon an old woman. The old woman had a boil on her leg and was crying bitterly.

"My good woman," said the eagle, hovering over her, "I've never seen such a huge boil before! However do you manage to walk?"

"I can hardly walk at all," the old woman moaned.

"Oh, you human beings!" said the bird. "If I did you a good turn today you would certainly show your gratitude by doing me a bad turn tomorrow!"

"Oh, no, no! I'd never do such a thing!" the old woman protested.

So of course the eagle decided to help her.

"Shut your eyes," she said . . . "Now open them!"

The old woman did as she was told, shutting her eyes and then opening them.

"Now look at your leg," said the eagle.

And there wasn't a sign of the boil to be seen!

Then the eagle told her to shut her eyes again. And when she was allowed to open them, the woods all around had been cut down and the ground levelled. Again, the old woman shut her eyes. And when she was allowed to open them this time she was surrounded by tall, handsome houses.

Once more the eagle bade her shut her eyes. And when she looked round again she was in a city. And the city was big.

"This city belongs to you, old woman!" said the friendly eagle.

The old woman could hardly contain herself for joy.

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" she cried. "And what can I do for you in return?"

"I don't want anything from you," the eagle declared. "The only thing I should like would be that eucalyptus tree over there."

"That's far too little! But just as you like – the tree is yours!" said the old woman.

So the eagle flew over to her eucalyptus tree, built herself a nest and laid two eggs in it. She covered them up and sat on them until they hatched out.

Hardly had her little ones slipped out of their shells when she flew off to hunt for food for them.

The old woman had her grandson living with her. He began to whine and whimper: "Owa! Owa! Owa!"

"Whatever's the matter with you?" his grandmother asked.

"I want to eat a baby eagle!" the child whined.

"But where am I to find such a thing?"

The child simply would not stop crying.

"Owa! Boo-hoo!" he whined, "I want a baby eagle! I want a baby eagle! I want to eat a baby . . ."

He went on and on, howling and nagging.

"I'll die if I don't get a baby eagle to eat!"

"Well, I can't let the child die just because of that," the old woman muttered, and made up her mind.

"Come on, folks, bring your axes!" she called out to her neighbours. "Go and fell the eucalyptus tree and fetch me the baby eagles from their nest!"

So the men began to saw at the tree-trunk.

"Ping-ping! Ping-ping! Ping-ping!" their axes sang.

Just as the tree was ready to fall, the older of the baby eagles stuck his head out of the nest and called shrilly to his mother:

"Sango, bird, hey!
Sango, bird, child of the eagle,
Sango, bird, hey!
Sango, bird, fly back from your search for food!
Sango, bird, hey!
Sango. . .oh. . .oh!"

With her child's screams for help ringing in her ears, the mother eagle flew back in haste, and her whirring wings made a sound like "Wha. . .wha. . .wha. . ."

She alighted on the tree.

"Sanguri!" she cried.

And the eucalyptus tree, whose trunk now hung by a thread, straightened up again. And the earth opened and swallowed up all those who had been busy cutting down the tree.

The mother eagle now fed her children with the food she had fetched for them. Then she cleaned their bills and feathers.

"Now I must be off again," she said.

The old woman's grandson went on nagging and whining, and at last she lost patience.

"Go and fell that tree," she ordered her servants. "My grandchild has simply got to have his baby eagle to eat!"

So the men made their way to the eucalyptus tree.

"Ping-ping! Ping-ping! Ping-ping!" sang their axes again.

Just as the tip of the tree was almost touching the ground the young eagle stuck his head out of the nest again and called shrilly to his mother:

"Sango, bird, hey!
Sango, bird, child of the eagle,
Sango, bird, hey!
Sango, bird, fly back from your search for food!
Sango, bird, hey!
Sango. . .oh. . .oh!"

He screamed and screamed and screamed for his mother, but no answer came. The tree struck the ground with a bump:

Brum! Brum!

Now the men had no trouble at all in getting the baby eagles out of their nest. However, one of them did manage to flutter away. It fled into a wawa-wawa tree.

They brought the other baby bird to the old woman. She fried it for her grandson – just the way he had longed to eat it – fried and garnished with boiled plantain.

The mother eagle returned shortly afterwards. She was horrified when she found the eucalyptus tree lying felled to the ground. Then she discovered her child hidden in the wawa-wawa tree. She asked him what had happened and the baby eagle told her all about it.

So then the mother bird flew swiftly on her broad wings into the city to the old woman. When she arrived the grandson had almost finished gobbling up her eagle child.

"I congratulate you!" the eagle screamed bitterly to the old woman.

Then she flew away again, and when she reached the outskirts of the city she began casting her spells.

"Sanguri!" she said, and all the people disappeared.

"Sanguri!" she said again, and the houses fell down. Not one remained standing.

"Sanguri!" she said once more, and the boil swelled up on the old woman's leg again.

"You have no one but yourself to blame for that, old woman!" said the eagle.

LUDWIG RENN

who wrote

The Shareholders' Meeting

was born in Dresden, in 1889, the son of a Prussian Junker family. His front-line experiences serving as an officer in the First World War contributed to his change from bourgeois to socialist. In 1928 he joined the Communist Party and took on a job of editing a Berlin left-wing journal. The Nazis arrested him at once in 1933 – sentencing him to three years in prison. He managed to escape to Switzerland and in 1936 he went to Spain, and he also toured America for aid to the Spanish Republic. On his return to Europe in 1939, he was interned by the French. A second escape took him to Mexico, where he lived until he came back to Germany in 1947. His many books include "War and Post-War" (1928–30), "Aristocracy in Decline" (1944) and a considerable variety of children's books. He was awarded the National Prize in 1955. . . .

It was time to hold the regular shareholders' meeting which was required by law. Herr von Selow and Fräulein von Ballenstedt prepared for this behind locked doors.

When the day came chairs were brought in and arranged round the table in the lawyer's office.

Burg arrived first and Fräulein von Ballenstedt stopped him at the door.

"Here's your – well, you know what it is. You'll hear about your official percentage of profits as a shareholder later," she said, handing him an envelope.

He was longing to find out how much "you know what" could be, but there was no quiet corner where he could open the envelope unobserved. So he retired to the lavatory, opened the envelope and found an astonishingly large number of bank-notes in it, which he transferred to his pocket-book.

When he returned Fräulein von Ballenstedt was standing by the door of the inner office with a number of similar envelopes in her hand.

Burg went in and found Kray, the lawyer, pacing nervously up and down and von Selow fiddling with a pile of papers.

The bell rang. Franz, tall and stout, looking even more thoroughly scrubbed than usual,. hastened to the door. General von Koennewitz came in, bearing himself in an upright, soldierly manner and looking thoroughly wide-awake.

"Where do we sit?" he asked, bowing courteously to everyone.

"In here, please," Selow replied, his face twitching nervously.

Fräulein von Ballenstedt bent towards the General and handed him an envelope.

"Don't open it just now, please. It's quite in order," she murmured.

The General nodded genially and went on into the lawyer's office.

After him came the proprietor of a bank, then von Selow's dainty little mother, "Her Excellency", who cast a coolly observant glance around her. Her well-chosen words and winning way of speaking assorted ill with her suspicious nature.

After her came a notary-major, extremely conscious of his own importance.

And Fräulein von Ballenstedt handed each of them an envelope, with the same remark:

"Don't open it just now, please. It's quite in order."

They all sat down. Fräulein von Ballenstedt passed round cigarettes and cigars.

The lawyer's unemotional voice broke the expectant silence.

"I now declare the shareholders' meeting open and request Herr von Selow to present the report."

Selow remained seated bending over his papers. He produced figures on turnover and profits. But the sums mentioned meant very little considering the rate of the dollar exchange at the time. Nobody could possibly take them seriously.

"As you see," said Selow, with astonishing self-assurance considering the nonsense he had been talking, "the company has developed well. The business is expanding. Extensive investments have been made. The inventories and office furniture have all been paid for."

Selow then announced the total profits and the sum accruing for each shareholder. What Burg had found in his envelope was about four times as much as his official share of the profits.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," the lawyer asked, "does anyone wish to comment on the report?"

Burg looked across at the General, who was well known for his quick intelligence. If Selow's report were taken at its face value, the business should have been bankrupt long ago. But the General said nothing. Burg caught a look in his eye which he had never seen there before. He wondered if he had over-estimated the General.

He glanced at the banker, who would certainly be able to judge the financial situation best. But he, too, appeared quite uninterested. The notary was puffing away with obvious relish at his black cigar.

Nobody here knew what the others had in their envelopes. Burg wondered whether von Selow had distributed

the money according to the importance of each shareholder, and not according to the number of shares they had in the company. In any case, he was sure that the money was a bribe to get these highly respectable citizens to hold their tongues.

"May I take it that you confirm the manager's report?" the lawyer asked.

There was a murmur of assent. Then they all took their leave, politely, as they had come.

After 1945

The Concentration Camp Commander
STEPHAN HERMLIN

Mother and Son
ELFRIEDE BRUENING

The Bedouin Girl
MAXIMILIAN SCHEER

New Year's Eve for Liane
LUDWIG TUREK

The Meeting
BORIS DJACENKO

STEPHAN HERMLIN

who wrote

The Concentration Camp Commander

is the gifted lyric poet. He was born in Karl Marx Stadt (then Chemnitz) in 1915. He joined the Communist Youth in 1931 and had to flee from the Nazis in 1936. Travels in Israel, Egypt and England preceded his joining the International Brigades in Spain. Following this, he fought in the French resistance. He returned to Germany in 1945. His translations into German of the poetry and prose of French, American and Latin American authors are well known. His own works include "Twelve Ballads of the Big Towns" (1944); "The Mansfield Oratorio" (1950), the text to a cantata on the Mansfield miners; "Flight of the Dove" (1952) and "City on a Hill", published 1962 in the Seven Seas Books series of translated German authors. His prizes include two National prizes, the one awarded in 1950, the other in 1954.

Shortly before noon on June 17th 1953 two men entered the cell in Saalstedt Prison which was occupied by a woman called Hedwig Weber. Asked why she was in prison, the woman said she had been sentenced to fifteen years for crimes against humanity.

"You're just the sort we need!" they answered, and told her she was free.

Late the previous evening, the prostitute and child murderer Rallmann, who occupied the cell opposite, had called her to the window with the signal they had agreed upon. The woman Weber had pulled herself to the window and heard Rallmann whisper that there was a strike on in the city. She wanted to ask more questions, but Rallmann had already slipped down from her window.

Early that morning, while they were out exercising in the yard, they had for the first time caught confused sounds of singing and shouting outside. The woman Weber had wondered idly, unwillingly, what they were celebrating this time. She had tried hard to remember the date, but without success; and it didn't matter anyway, she had thought, for they were always inventing new excuses for celebrations. Out there, with the men prisoners in front of her, she felt that the free hour was even shorter than usual that day.

An hour or two later she had again heard the sound of many voices, nearer than usual, sharper and clearer, but not clear enough to distinguish words. Some years earlier, under a previous sentence, Weber had spent four months in prison for theft. But this time she had already crossed off the twenty-eighth week on her wall calendar, which meant that she had been there long enough to become insensitive to the usual prison noises. The wing in which the women were confined was some way back from the street, so that she could not always clearly distinguish sounds which penetrated from outside; not that it mattered. The sounds only provided an opportunity to jump into a line of thought, an idea; as one might jump into a moving train; there was no need to make any further move, for one was already inside and everything approached of its own volition. Then she would abandon herself to dreaming, wildly and avidly, yet without aim, without faith.

None of this had changed, even early that morning – not even when the woman Rallmann had called her to the window again to tell her she had seen smoke. Weber could

see no smoke. And what if there is smoke, she thought. A gentle south wind was blowing and the sun was probably forcing it down from the pump factory chimneys. The smoke was inside her, a fog puffed up and spread out inside her . . . She heard hasty steps in the gangways and dull blows from below mingled with the noises of a crowd. Then she heard a scream far away, to which she reacted coldly, for it was the sort of inhuman scream which could only come from a human being.

There had been no noise in the cells so far. But people began to talk now – loudly, hurriedly, with bursts of shrill laughter. The talking came nearer, with steps and the sound of doors opening and shutting. Then bars scraped and Weber saw the two men. The one who had asked her why she was in prison was tall, young and handsome. The only thing she noticed about the older man was the expression on his face. His eyes met hers briefly as she answered. Otherwise his glance slid by, a hair's breadth away. But you could trust people with that kind of look.

The two stood there in the doorway of her cell; they wore Basque berets and sun glasses, and behind them she saw prisoners running along the gangways. She recognised Inge Gruetzner from the floor above. Inge waved gaily at her over the heads of the two men and disappeared. Weber felt a wave of the will to believe and of inability to believe surge through her. This fog which was spreading out and puffing up inside her filled her with a wild, confused desire to scream and rave, to break things.

The men told her that big things were happening in Berlin and everywhere else, the government had been overthrown, the Communist regime was going begging and the Americans were already on the way.

"And the Russians?"

"The Russians aren't going to start a war because of Ulbricht," said the handsome young man and began to whistle, gazing at the wall as if all sorts of interesting things were to be seen there.

"The Russians will withdraw to the Weichsel."

"We need people like you," said the older man. "You must join the Saalstedt command staff. I can imagine all those who'll be throwing themselves at us. We need people with experience and convictions for this job."

"Is it really true? Am I really free?" the woman Weber asked through the fog which still surrounded her.

She listened to the noise in the gangways and in the street, and it seemed as if she were suddenly hearing half-forgotten music, the shrill note of pipes above the banging of drums which introduced the march which followed, and then the confused raving – "Heil!" – embedded in this march and spreading from street to street.

At this moment she stepped out of the fog which had enveloped her. She remembered clearly, and quite indifferently, the seven months she had spent in the cell, where she should have spent fifteen years; she remembered the seven years before those seven months – seven years full of fear, dissimulation, hopelessness, full of inexpressible hatred of all those she had once had under her and now saw over her, of those new people in government offices, with their newspapers and flags and contests and slogans. This whole period had been one long nightmare of unlimited dangers which she had no power to influence, which she could not escape because something inside her would not permit her to believe in the possibility of flight or of change. She had not sought out old friends. At the house of a friend, who did not know her real identity, she had heard the enquiries for missing persons broadcast regularly over the radio from West Berlin. One day she had heard her own name:

A search is being made for Hedwig Weber, office employee, last seen in Fuerstenberg in March 1945.

She had almost given herself away. It had been clever of them to say Fuerstenberg which was not far away from Ravensbrueck concentration camp.

Now and again she had started work in factories, but

each time she had tired of the people and of the work. Her forged identity papers, made out in the name of Helga Schmidt, tied her up with a past which was foreign to her in a thousand ways, a past about which she knew nothing. She had had affairs with men to make the time pass. In Magdeburg she had got to know a man who reminded her of Oberscharfuehrer Worringer, with whom she had had an affair in Ravensbrueck.

After she had been sentenced to four months' prison for stealing a roll of copper wire she had felt safe for the first time, for nobody would bother to take any special notice of the prisoner Schmidt, nobody would ask her awkward questions and she need no longer be afraid that somebody might recognise her in the street. After that she received a letter from her father in Hanover, telling her that over there nobody bothered about such things any more. On the contrary, his previous job in the Reich Security Office had even been a recommendation when he applied for employment in the judiciary. He couldn't complain, he wrote, but she ought to wait a bit before joining him, because he was still having difficulties about getting a new apartment.

She was soon thoroughly sick of this life with the blue shirts and the entire business of signing declarations and culture and faculties and holiday homes, with People's Police in lorries, and with hunting for something to wear and not finding anything. And above all she had grown tired of being careful in the streets and cafés not to draw attention to herself, and if possible only to show her profile. She was so fed up with all of it that she had seriously thought of taking the train to Hanover, although she felt the danger of being looked for there was greater than here, where she felt certain nobody expected her to be.

But then the thing happened which she had pictured and thought about a thousand times and had believed impossible – a former prisoner had recognised her here in Saalstedt in the street, as she was leaving a shop. She had

been arrested and had been sentenced to fifteen years' solitary confinement. . . .

So nightmares don't last forever, the woman Weber now thought. What had been on top before was bound to come out on top again. This had to happen. She had to smile as she caught herself in a typical gesture – her hand was making a movement, and probably had been doing so for some time, a long familiar movement – cracking an imaginary whip against an imaginary leather top-boot.

"You can trust Bluemlein," the handsome young chap in the cell door was saying. "He's in the know. He was in Zehlendorf only yesterday. He can hear the grass grow. That's why he's called Bluemlein, Little Flower."

"It seems to me we can all trust each other," the man called Bluemlein said modestly. "But first you must get some other clothes. You're much too noticeable like that. Well, you can pick out some things in the government shops. They won't cost you anything today."

He stood aside for Weber to leave the cell first.

The cheerful blonde woman guard lay on the top step, her face crushed in, but still breathing.

"She was certainly one of the worst torturers," said the handsome young chap as they passed her.

Weber had never been tortured. Nobody had been tortured in Saalstedt prison. That was something which Weber had never been able to understand, and why she said, now, "Wasn't she just . . ."

And she noticed the way Bluemlein glanced quickly at her. He could smile without moving a muscle. His glance seemed to say, We understand each other already. . . .

Weber felt something like comforting security. The prison was now almost empty. Somebody had turned the radio on at full blast.

"It would be nice to sit at the radio," said Bluemlein. "RIAS* is broadcasting special messages all day!"

* Radio Station in American Sector of West Berlin

The woman Weber remembered how they had celebrated the capture of Paris, Smolensk and Simferopol and all the other places.

Better not think about that, she said to herself.

She felt an urge to tell somebody about everything that had happened to her. But she could think of no one. Worringer would have been the right person, but he had disappeared like a vision. She had heard that he was in the Argentine. Then she thought of her father in Hanover.

"Wait a minute. I just want to write a letter."

The three of them went into a sort of sentry-box, the door of which swung on its hinges. There was a typewriter on a table beside an overturned chair without a back. A hot wind blew in through the empty window-frame, in which some jagged glass from the broken window-pane still stuck. Weber pulled a sheet of paper out of a pile. She found a pencil in a drawer, too. Half sitting on the table, she wrote quickly:

Dear Father,

It's happened. The East was bound to be free some time. We shall soon be able to put on our beloved SS uniforms again. Then the time will have come for me to take up my work in the political department or in the Gestapo again. Good friends have taken me under their wing until our flag finally flies again. It won't be long now.

Your Hedi

She hunted for an envelope, but found none. I'll find one later on, she thought, and slipped the letter into her pocket.

The daylight dazzled her. She had not expected the street to be so empty. A few people lounging around the gateway watched her leave. The noise had subsided like the rush of water after a sudden shower. It was hot and empty everywhere and she felt as if she were swimming in this empty space and in the hot wind which played with leaves which had dried up and fallen early in the heat. A

group of people had held up a beer wagon at the corner of Merseburger Strasse and two men were unloading the casks while others distributed bottles to passers-by and those standing about.

An old man in a waistcoat and collarless shirt took off his sweaty cap. Glancing at the woman Weber out of strained, tired eyes, he said, "Come on, take a swig. The Americans'll pay for everything."

A small loudspeaker car drove slowly through the street calling the Saalstedters to an open-air meeting on the market square at 6 o'clock. Weber noticed a man with a handkerchief knotted on his head scratching about in a tiny flower-bed in his front garden. She also noticed somebody shutting a window as the loudspeaker car went past. She caught herself cracking her invisible whip again. She suddenly wished she had those people in their houses and gardens and everywhere else in front of her, so that she could force that look into their faces which the women had had on the parade-ground in Ravensbrueck concentration camp.

As they turned into Feld Strasse, they saw the house with broken windows and in front of it a huge pile of paper which writhed and twisted and turned black in invisible flames. Two or three people were tending the fire, which threw up big black flakes against the house walls. A delayed portfolio fell with a crash into the street, thrown down through the fluttering curtains of a second-floor window. The bookshop on the ground floor stood open. Its shelves had been stirred up into confusion.

The handsome young chap snatched the top book from a pile which a young fellow in a fancy shirt was carrying out into the street, glanced at the title and said, "Checkoff . . . another of those Ivans. That can go, too."

They stood and watched a moment as the flames licked round the book.

The command staff had been set up on the third floor of a block of flats. Weber was left waiting several minutes

in an empty room. Then Bluemlein called her into the room in which the others were sitting. There were six or seven of them and she knew none of them. They asked her about Ravensbrueck and many other things. Bluemlein and a tall man with a broad, high forehead and heavy eyelids appeared to be the most important men there. She could imagine them both in uniform.

Later on she asked for something to eat and changed her clothes in the bath-room. While she was washing she heard something roaring and rattling down the street. She pushed open the window and followed with her eyes a little column of Soviet tanks. Her throat felt dry. From up here she could see over the roofs and she even had a glimpse of the river, because the town sloped downwards to the market square and the river beyond. There were people in the streets now, and she could see them clearly walking along. There were women pushing perambulators too, leisurely, as if it were Sunday. There were also a number of drunks whose brawling sounded thin in the distance. And through all these sounds the tanks, with their commanders' heads showing through the open conning towers, rattled indifferently, persistently down the street and disappeared with a scream of chains around the corner.

The woman Weber went quickly back into the room. People came and went, some confidently, some with hanging heads and shifty eyes. Somebody reported that they had not been able to get a strike going in the pump factory; the workers had driven them off the factory grounds with sticks.

"You have to take the Red pack into account," the man with the high forehead said to her. He took her into a corner and went on, "There's no need to lose your nerve, Party Comrade . . ."

He spoke in a half whisper and smiled.

"Just remember one thing. We have to deal with all sorts of people here, too, who think we're not good enough or

want to get us out of the way. We're not quite alone, you understand. The slogan is still 'Seize power by legal means'. We haven't got beyond that yet. The Americans have other irons in the fire, too. So we still have to make some allowance for these liberals and such people."

Bluemlein joined them.

"Well, chief. You giving her a short Nazi training course?"

"I'm telling you this because you're to speak this evening on behalf of the political prisoners," the man with the high forehead went on. "You can press the tube hard, but it's always got to be the right tube . . ."

Weber asked about the Soviet tanks and what was happening about a Russian withdrawal.

"We'll work that out in time. We've cleared out the People's Police. They've gone to earth. They didn't even shoot. The Russians'll give in, too."

We're bound to win with people like that leading us, thought Weber.

A second later she was picturing a future full of endless marches, special reports, roaring, jubilating loudspeakers. In her mind's eye she saw a crowd in smart, colourful uniforms eyed enviously and respectfully by a mass of civilians, long flags hanging down from attic windows almost to the street below, and herself – all in white – and Worringer – all in black – entering the registry office through an espalier. A blind, raging madness seized her, wiping out the room, the talk, the noises around her. She saw herself at work again, long-planned, carefully distributed work, sensible, useful work, she thought, investigating and examining, and later on Ravensbrueck again – all that had order and meaning for her. But you didn't get to know us properly then, she thought. The next time you'll really find out what we're like. The other was only a try-out.

Groups of two and three were making their way to the market. Others leaned out of windows and looked down at the crowd on its way to the meeting. People walked in

a leisurely way, chatting as they went and stopping every now and then to read the notices put up by the military commandant announcing a state of emergency.

Passing by a silent group standing in front of a shop that had been plundered, Weber heard a man say, "That's our money that's been wasted. The rabble . . ."

And a voice retorted quickly and sharply, "There's always chips when you cut wood."

The man turned round indignantly, but she could not hear what he said.

They met the first tank at the entrance to the market. A little soldier with a shaven head leant against the wall rolling himself a cigarette. A woman in front of Weber spat dramatically at his feet. The little soldier looked at her in surprise and tapped his forehead with his finger. Somebody laughed in an embarrassed way.

The speakers' platform had been set up at the back of St Mary's Church and someone had hung a white backdrop behind it with the word *Freedom!* painted on it. The woman Weber saw nothing but the platform and the slogan; she was barely conscious of the tanks standing all round the market square, nor did she bother about the crowd which swirled loosely over the square. The Russians had allowed the meeting. Good, she thought, but they'll soon regret it. In her head there was a confused ringing of bells, commands shouted out on the parade-ground – a frozen madness in the midst of which she tried to keep a grip on the main ideas which the man with the high forehead had impressed upon her. She heard Bluemlein opening the meeting and asking someone to speak. And after a while she heard:

"And now you will hear a victim of Communist terror, the former political prisoner Helga Schmidt."

It took her a few seconds to realise that she was meant. But perhaps it was quite a good thing that they had used that name again she thought. Then she heard an old, half-forgotten voice – her own:

"Volksgenossen . . ."

Perhaps it would have been better to open her speech with some other form of address. But after that she made no mistakes. It was as easy as if she had done nothing else all these years. She said that the long suffering during the post-war period, the total terrorisation of the people of Middle Germany, had revealed the truth. People here really knew what freedom and human dignity meant – especially the political prisoners. In the prisons and in everyday life under this regime, whose main feature was misery and hunger, an unbreakable unity with the West had grown up which had made it a duty for the West to liberate the eighteen million people here who were longing for justice and freedom – the liberation was at this moment taking place.

The crowd dissolved before her eyes into changing coloured splashes between strips of dusty pavement. You'll have to pay for that, too, she thought – that we've had to take you in this way. She had a feeling that somebody was looking at her in a peculiar fashion. She fixed her gaze on the unshaven face of a little old man in a shabby suit who was staring at her with pale, worried eyes. He had clapped once or twice, shaken his head once or twice. There was frequent applause here and there – hesitant, confused applause which sometimes came at the wrong place.

She was speaking now to the shabby old man, as if he were her only listener. Who are you, anyway? she wondered. You clap now, but you'll be no help when things come to a head. Who are you people? You were all more or less traitors and defeatists. You lost our war because you were thinking about filling your stomachs and about your own four walls instead of about the Fuehrer and the New Europe. And when the end came you were sick of us and threw yourselves into the arms of the Reds and the Bolshevists. At the very best you're like the mortar we need to build up Greater Germany. And the last time you

were pretty poor mortar at that. Now you're giving us your little finger, you poor idiots, but we'll take your whole hand and all the rest of you and put you all through the mincer.

Aloud she said, "The day of reckoning is approaching. The Red oppressors' hour of grace is running out. Only these tanks protect them now. Be prepared; and then show them the way home with bullets and ropes!"

She stepped back a pace. The crowd broke apart. The old man was gone without looking back. Groups moved off towards the neighbouring streets. Quite close to her she heard a deep voice chanting a prayer of thanks. Farther back a few people struck up the Horst Wessel song. She could see some men attacking the singers.

"Those are from the pump factory!" somebody called out.

But just then the square began to roar and shake. The tank drivers had started their motors and let them run, leaning against their huge machines and laughing. The tanks stood still, only their motors were running. The woman Weber got down off the platform. People moved aside in front of her and she realised that the meeting was at an end. She looked round for the man with the high forehead, for Bluemlein and the handsome young chap, or anyone else she knew.

She took a few steps towards Feld Strasse. Then she was standing between two young men in trench coats, one of whom bent down and shouted in her ear, above the roar of the tanks:

"Hedwig Weber? Come with us, please!"

She made no attempt to run away or call for help. Nobody would have heard her, nobody took any notice of her. Everything happened so quickly, with such lightning speed, that it hardly seemed real.

This could not be the end.

They may even hang me tonight, she thought.

Three days later she stood in the prisoner's dock. She

had had a dream during the night preceding the trial. The air resounded with a tremendous ringing of bells, roars and screams swept down the street, from the windows you could hear the remorseless tramp-tramp of thousands of feet, and a long army of field grey and khaki figures snaked through the city. Her cell door opened and her father appeared in his black uniform with the death's head on his cap.

"Come, Hedi, the Fuehrer is waiting for you down below," he said.

She denied nothing in court, for there was nothing to deny. She had been camp commandant in Ravensbrueck concentration camp for two years. Before that she had worked for the Gestapo. Asked how many prisoners had been murdered by her orders, she replied that it could not have been more than eighty or ninety. Yes, she had maltreated prisoners herself, had kicked and whipped them and let the bloodhounds loose on them. She had had to admit all this seven months earlier, when they had sentenced her to fifteen years' solitary confinement. She understood why they made her repeat it now. The court was full to the last seat, and there must have been many people who had heard her speak on the market square. The protocol of her speech was read out. The letter which had been found on her was also read out.

Until the trial started she had had an ever-receding glimmer of hope that it would never take place – that this Red government would be overthrown after all. Perhaps the Americans would really come, for they had certainly realised long ago that they should have fought the war on Hitler's side. And then she would get out.

Whenever she was allowed to sit down while the defence or the prosecution or some witness took the stand, she let herself drift into a stream of imaginings and silent curses. The talk going on up there did not interest her. Those cowards of Americans, she thought, we'll gobble them up, too, when we've finished with the Russians and

the French and all the other riff-raff. They'll give me at least twenty years or life, she thought, but I shan't have to sit out a quarter of that.

She again saw the parade-ground in front of her, and a faceless mass in striped rags stretching far away to the horizon. And then we'll go off on holiday every year in the summer, she thought, and she imagined herself with Worringer in the midst of a landscape with sea and mountains and palms, like the pictures of the Riviera which she had seen. And all at once she remembered a comrade who had told her how they had hung Frenchmen all along the road near Avignon, one on each tree to the right and to the left. Then she was back in Ravensbrueck, remembering how she had called out the dogs and driven the prisoners into the latrines, shouting:

"Catch her, Thilo! Catch her, Teut!"

The court needed only a few minutes to consider its verdict. When she was brought back into court she noticed the shabby little man who had caught her eye on the market square. His face was turned towards her. She saw in it nothing but disgust and hatred. Quickly, she thought, as the judges returned: Life, life, life.

She was told to stand up. She was sentenced to death. She heard isolated words through the buzzing in her ears. There was no appeal against the sentence and it was to be carried out at once. She did not want to scream or fall down. For the first and last time in her existence she pondered on the inexplicable strength of her victims which had fed her rage. There had been a German girl student who had let herself be beaten to death without uttering a word; a Russian woman who had called out "Hitler kaputt!" just before she died; four French women who had gone to their death singing the "Marseillaise".

A voice within her whined for life. And as two policewomen led her away there was nothing but this voice and a blood-stained, confused void within her.

ELFRIEDE BRUENING

who wrote

Mother and Son

was born in 1910. She was the daughter of a carpenter and she worked as typist and secretary before launching out on her own as a writer. Her first stories were published in the city newspapers. She joined the Communist Party in 1930. It was then that she began writing for the left-wing press. The Nazis arrested her in 1935 and she was put in Barnim Women's Prison. She served her sentence, and fortunately escaped further imprisonment. She has been a free-lance author and journalist since 1945 and she lives and writes in Berlin. Her many novels and stories deal with the Nazi period, but she has also written any number of lighter tales on contemporary problems. Among her novels are "That You May Live", the story of two mothers during the Nazi time, and "Regine Haberkorn" which is a story of Germany after the war.

For Clara Gutjahr who worked in a Berlin foundry, a new life started, almost without her noticing it, when she was already fifty-one. It was a day in February 1949 which began like any other day. She slipped through the gate just in time; if she had been three minutes later the doorkeeper would have had to put her name down on the "late" list.

That was a bit of luck, she thought, and made up her mind not to run things so fine again. It wasn't easy to get away early in the morning now that her son was home again. He was still in bed when she left the house, but she always found something else to do for him before she tore herself away.

There was no one in the yard as she crossed it. She hurried along the worn path, past heaps of scrap metal piled up on either side. The rubble-clearance women were already there, knocking mortar off the old bricks in front of what had been Block Five. The foundry was at the far end of the yard, in the only building which had so far been completely re-built. There was even glass in one or two windows, and the dim light shining through struggled against the grey light of dawn. Thin smoke spiralled up out of the chimney into the foggy air. Clara Gutjahr shivered a little, as she always did early in the morning before she got properly going. But she hurried round the block, although she longed to get to her warm work-bench. They had unloaded wood against the back wall a few days before and it was still lying there, cut into small logs, ready for the stove, so to speak. Clara measured up at a glance how many logs she could shove into her bag. A pity they were so wet, she thought; she wouldn't be able to carry many. But it would be enough for one evening, anyway. For a moment she was tempted to fill her bag at once, but she thought better of it. Somebody might see her; it would be better to come again just before she went home, even though the others would come then, too. Everybody who lived in the western sector of Berlin would be there, for they didn't like freezing at home any more than she did.

Five minutes later she was standing at her bench as usual. She was making Model 307 cores just now – a job she didn't really like, because she only had to use her hands. She liked doing trickier jobs, cores as thin as flat pastry or sharp like church spires or cork-screwed like snail-shells. She used to enjoy fiddling at jobs like that

for hours on end until she had worked out the best way to do it and the sand was like wax in her hands. Later on, when the core came out of the furnace hard and firm and exactly the right shape, she was always surprised at how well she had managed it. And the smaller satisfaction she felt was something like the tremendous feeling she had had many years ago when she bore her son, as if she had given life to these cores, too.

Today she was only making simple cores for flat-irons, things with a tip to them like small paper bags; any child could have made them playing in his sand-box.

Clara worked quickly and adroitly. She didn't take her eyes off her work, so thoroughly was she engrossed in it. She sieved the sand, mixed the binding substance with it and moulded and pressed the mixture as if it were much more than just sand. She had been moulding her life like this now for nearly thirty-five years. At first, when she was very young, she had moulded it with her husband. She remembered quite clearly how, when she was barely seventeen, he had dragged her along with him to the foundry. She had thoughtlessly put on a bright summer dress.

"Now let's see what you can do," he had said.

And she hadn't been able to do anything right. She had let the cores burn in the furnace and in the evening she had cried as she washed the oily soot out of her hair. Never again, she thought. I never want to go into that dirty old hole again. But she was back there the next morning. Her husband had got it into his head that he wanted to set up a little foundry of his own, and he needed a wife who could help him.

Clara had found out at last how to deal with the sand, and she had also come to understand her husband. They just didn't want to go on sweating for other people. They wanted to earn money for themselves and get on in the world. . . .

Clara Gutjahr sighed as she pushed the sooty hair out of her eyes. She hadn't always been able to mould her life

the way she moulded sand, although she had learned to do that better every year. She shoved a full tray into the furnace. She checked up on the temperature and then decided she had time for her midmorning lunch, which was only dry bread. She choked it down and went back to her work at once, as if she could chase away her thoughts while she worked. . . . Their dream of setting up a foundry of their own had never been anything but a dream. They had sent Max off to the front in 1918, at the very end of the war and she had made cores for grenades. She had been on piece wages and had thought that every extra core she made would help Max. She had really believed she was helping to win the war more quickly.

She pushed her work aside and took a few minutes off. The foreman came over to her with a sheet of paper in his hand.

"Just put your name to that," he said. "There's a meeting after work. Important statement by the management."

Clara did as she was told and handed him back the sheet of paper sullenly. That was the last straw, she thought. She would be late getting home on account of their old meeting, and by that time her son would certainly have gone out again.

She took up a lump of oily sand, slapping it about and kneading it into the shape she wanted. She had slapped her son like that sometimes when he was a boy. She had been an ambitious mother and had sent him to high school so that one day he could have all the things his parents had had to do without. And all those years she had gone on working in the foundry so as to have money for the things they needed. For a few years she had made cores for meat mincers, and then she was back at cores for grenades. But this time she hadn't over-exerted herself. This time they had taken her son right out of school.

She stopped again. The siren let out three short blasts. It was midday and she could hear the workers shuffling past her window on their way to the canteen. Clara shoved

the sand aside and put her dinner-bowl down on the table. She ate right there, so that she could keep her eye on the furnace. She knew that furnace as well as she knew her own body. She knew now, for instance, without even glancing at the thermometer, that it was much too hot and that she would have to take out some of the firing. She knew all sorts of things about the foundry without even looking up from her work. She knew that the casters at the far end of the workshop often stood idle for minutes on end because they had to wait till the iron was smelted; the smelter poked about in his furnace as if it were a hollow tooth and he didn't want to hurt it.

If Clara had been foreman she wouldn't have let that pass; but she wasn't the foreman, she was just Clara Gutjahr, an ordinary working woman who had been making cores all her life to keep body and soul together. Once upon a time she had hoped she would be able to give up this work. But when the first world war ended and Max came home she knew at once that he wasn't the same man. The disease he had brought back from the trenches gnawed at him and a few years later she was alone with her son.

Things had always turned out differently from what she had planned and hoped, thought Clara, as she went over to the meeting with the others. The big hall was decorated with red flags and slogans and the works' band played a cheerful tune. Clara, wedged in between sweating men, felt lifted up and carried away, far away out of that hall. She thought of her son at home. How happy she had been when he came back from prisoner-of-war camp. She had looked at him as he stood there in his threadbare uniform, at his pale face, still surprisingly young and with the same questing expression it had always held. What was to become of him now? she had wondered. He had been a pilot in the war, but nobody needed pilots any more. And she had still not found the right answer. She could only tell him about what had changed. He couldn't go back to school, but he had learnt no trade, either. For some jobs

he knew too much and for others too little – that much she understood. But in her heart of hearts she still wanted some special future for him.

The music stopped. The speech pattered against Clara's ear like rain, monotonous rain falling from a monotonous grey sky. When you have stood in front of a hot dry furnace for seven hours speeches are apt to make you sleepy. She closed her eyes and caught only scraps of what was said . . . "we know where we stand at last . . . handed over today . . . in trusteeship, now a nationally owned enterprise . . . belongs to the people. Our property . . . it belongs to us . . ."

"So what?" said the man next to Clara, grinning sarcastically. "That won't put food in our stomachs."

The rain cloud had split open for a few seconds, but now it closed over her again and the rain pattered down monotonously as before. When it stopped the back rows in the hall were already half empty. The others began pushing their way out, Clara in the lead. The wood, she thought suddenly. She would have to try and get out first.

But however hard she pushed and shoved, the others were quicker. Rubble Elsa was already rooting about amongst the logs when she got there. Clara hesitated.

"Come on, help yourself, chum," Elsa called out, a leer on her furrowed old face – it was that face which had earned her the nickname "Rubble". "It's not theft any more, you know. It all belongs to us anyway."

She's like a worm, thought Clara, suddenly disgusted. Like a worm eating away at a building from underneath, until one day it falls down and nobody knows why. She turned away, ashamed to be caught thieving. But then she thought of her son, freezing at home. She went back and hastily crammed a couple of logs into her bag without looking at what she was doing, as if her hands were doing it on their own.

The north-bound train through the western sector was packed full with knapsacks, suitcases, sacks and faces –

thin, dirty, tired, pale faces. But there was also a sprinkling of plump, powdered and painted faces amongst them, belonging to people living in the well-off western suburbs. These people always held aloof, forming little islands of respectability in the sea of workers washing up against them on all sides. Clara, with her bag of logs between her knees, stood close by one of these islands and she could not avoid hearing what they were saying.

"And how are the children getting on?"

"My son is studying at the Free University."

"Yes, of course, he can't possibly mix with these . . . And your daughter?"

"I've taken her into my business. We don't want her working for other people. And anyway, there's much more incentive to work for yourself."

That stuck in Clara's mind, although she was hardly conscious of it as she sat down by the lukewarm stove, which she had quickly lit when she got home, to wait for her son. He'd be out with that friend again, she thought. At first she had tried to break up their friendship, for she did not think much of the tall, gangling young man from the house next door who never looked her straight in the face. But her son hung on to him like a faithful dog.

She got up and fetched her knitting. As she unravelled the wool she remembered how she had crocheted edgings for the kitchen towels, crocheting all her plans into them, too – plans for a business of their own, for the boy's future and for the time when he would be able to take over the business. . . . She laid her work aside, feeling suddenly wide-awake. She closed her eyes and imagined herself at the meeting again. But the speech, which had sounded like monotonous raindrops falling from a monotonous grey sky the first time, now sounded quite clearly in her ears, word for word.

". . . you won't be working for other people any more. You'll be working for yourselves. In a nationally owned enterprise. In your own works . . ."

She slept badly that night, tossing and turning. Yet, somehow, when she got up she felt fresh and rested. She did not bother so much about moving quietly so as not to wake her son. Let him wake up, she thought defiantly. She went over to his bed and looked at him lying there, his head buried in the pillow, relaxed and somehow slovenly. He had come home very late. His hands were spread out like fans on the coverlet, big, strong hands, like Max's, she thought, real caster's hands. She stood there for a while, staring down at him. Then she turned away briskly, for she did not want to be the last at work again.

Everything went on as usual at the foundry, but Clara seemed to be seeing it all for the first time. She noticed the way the women clearing up the ruins passed bricks from one to another down the line carefully, as if they were expensive butter and not just bricks.

"If they go on at that rate they won't have the place cleared in a year," thought Clara angrily.

Out of the corner of her eye she glimpsed shadows moving round the pile of wood behind the foundry. What's it got to do with me, she thought. But it worried her and nagged at the back of her mind. Even when she got to her own work-bench she could not retire into herself and take no notice of what the others were up to. She could see the smelter leisurely stirring the liquid iron, and the casters idling. . . .

The foreman had been ill for some days and if anybody wanted anything he came to Clara. They had got used to doing that, too.

At noon the manager came to have a look round. Clara went over to him. Couldn't they arrange for the smelter to get a bonus? she asked. Not just a bit more wages – he would only be asking for more after a week or two – but a really good bonus for every extra ton he smelted. Things simply had to get moving, she knew . . .

The manager had been there a short time, but Clara knew him quite well. They had played marbles together

in the street as children. He looked down at her hot, grubby face.

"Maybe you're right, Clara," he said thoughtfully, squeezing her hand. He was like a brother to whom she could speak freely.

"And get that wood-pile cleared up!" she called after him. But he was already outside.

For the first time she went home without any wood in her bag. She felt like a ship which had thrown out its ballast and could now sail straight ahead.

"You have a warm place to work in," her son grumbled.

Her answer was to shove some tools into his hand – a hammer, saw and the little old wheelbarrow – and to tell him to go out and gather brushwood in the near-by woods.

"Then you won't have to freeze," she said cheerfully.

That left him no time to go out with his friend. He fell into bed dead tired that evening. Clara looked at him as he slept. He was thoroughly exhausted and his big, strong hands were covered with scratches.

He's not used to real work, she thought, suddenly realising that this was her own fault.

She took her time; it was no use trying to rush things. She would have to get rid of a lot of rubble before anything new could grow on this soil. But she began to watch her son more closely. She noticed that he avoided looking at her. It was difficult to get him to answer questions, and he developed the habit of sitting moodily in a corner for hours.

It took time to drag the truth out of him at last. His "friend" had been arrested on a "business" trip and it was a stroke of luck that he had not been arrested, too.

She let a few days go by again. Then one evening, after he had been idling about all day, she asked him whether he really enjoyed wasting his time.

"Well, what else can I do?" he retorted hotly. "Nobody ever taught me to do anything else."

That was the signal for Clara. The next morning she laid out his good suit and woke him up.

"Now get dressed quickly," she said.

She took him along to the foundry, past the door-keeper and up the stairs to the manager's office. Her heart was in her throat as she went in.

The room was thick with tobacco smoke and faces loomed up out of it one after another. Somebody came over to her and asked if she knew how much they had done on Saturday. Of course she knew that – seven hundred kilos of iron and fifty kilos of aluminium.

"I knew a bonus would do the trick," she said with a smile. "But that's not why I'm here."

She felt for her son's hand, and she pressed it shyly.

"Well, Clara, we want to make you foreman," said the manager, coming over to her. "That's why we sent for you. Will you have a shot at it?"

She could not speak. She just nodded. She hadn't even known they had sent for her. She had come to them for quite a different reason. She turned to her son again and drew him to her side. After all, she thought, if she was to be foreman she could have an apprentice. She looked round triumphantly at the circle of homely, familiar men's faces and seized the hands stretched out to her. Then she pushed her son forward just the way she pushed her cores into her good old furnace every day.

"So now see if you can make something useful out of him," she said. "So far he's never learnt anything except shooting."

She dropped her eyes for a moment and added shamefacedly, "He's been scolding me because he was never taught to do a decent job of work. I've held him back too long. I didn't want him to sweat for others. . . ."

She looked up again and her tired eyes shone like a girl's.

"I always wanted him to work in his own business," she murmured.

MAXIMILIAN SCHEER

who wrote

The Bedouin Girl

is a much-travelled publicist and journalist. The son of a blacksmith who was a socialist, Scheer was born in the Rhineland in 1896 and did farm work before he went to Cologne to study theatre art and the history of literature. He emigrated to France in 1933, and in 1939 he was interned in a French camp. He escaped to the U.S.A. via Portugal. Since his return to Germany in 1947, he has been a literary editor and radio executive. His many published works include his books of travels while in exile and his reportages of his post-war trips to Algeria, Iran and Egypt, as well as his numerous visits to West Germany. He is the author of a book and a play on Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the cold-war victims put to death in the U.S.A. in 1953. A second play is based upon "Merry-Go-Round" by Albert Maltz.

Sora was the daughter of a Bedouin called Benjaybia. Her family did not live as nomads; they had settled down, but retained their Bedouin name and remained in touch with their tribe. Her father had a piece of land and a little house on the outskirts of the big Algerian city of Constantine. He drove to market every day with his cart loaded with lettuce and green vegetables and onions. He had four

sons and several daughters and he ruled his household according to rigid Bedouin custom; the boys were spoilt and allowed a great deal of freedom, the girls were strictly guarded.

Sora was only thirteen when she had to start wearing a veil. After that she was not allowed out of the house without her veil or unaccompanied by her father, a brother or an uncle. The little she saw of the outside world she had to see in silence. On her few outings to visit the mosque or relatives – always accompanied by a male relative – she peered silently through her veil at what went on around her.

At home, she could leave off her veil only when she was helping her mother with the housework, and she was not allowed to speak to anyone except her mother and sisters if her father was not there. Her older brothers did not consider her worth talking to; she was just a girl – pale, pretty, ignorant and without any rights of her own. She could neither read nor write. People learned her given name when they were no longer strangers; it would have been an impertinence to ask what it was. Questions of this kind had often resulted in violent death, because it was thought that they besmirched the family's honour.

So Sora grew up hemmed in by custom. She was often silent, but the world did not pass her by in silence. Her father ate first with his sons. Sora, the eldest daughter, waited on the men at table; so that she heard the things they spoke about, and remembered what they said.

That was how she heard about the revolution.

"May Allah permit us to live in peace," her father had said, meaning peace for himself, his family, his house, his field, his vegetables and his business. He and his sons regarded all things from this point of view.

Her three brothers worked in their father's business, the fourth was studying medicine in Constantine. Once she heard the latter talking about a students' strike and she asked her mother what a strike was.

"That's when people refuse to work," said her mother.

"But what's a students' strike?"

"I suppose they stop work, too."

"In the university?" Sora asked.

"I suppose so," said her mother, for it was the first time she had heard of such a thing.

"But why should they do that?" Sora persisted.

"I don't know."

"Because of the revolution?"

"I tell you I don't know."

On another occasion she heard that a hospital servant had been caught stealing medicine. A watch had been set on him because medicines had been disappearing for some time. The servant was said to have brought the stolen medicine into the Djebel, and Sora knew that Algerians were fighting against the French in the mountains. Sora busied herself about the room, so as to hear the end of the story, but her father scolded her.

"Whatever makes you so slow today?"

She never heard what happened to the hospital servant, but she hoped he had escaped into the Djebel.

What surprised her most was something her brother once said as she came from the kitchen with a dish in her hands.

"Girls from good families," he was saying, "that's what's bound to happen if you let girls go to school and even study medicine. They just run off to the men in the Djebel."

Sora nearly dropped the dish outside the door, she was so excited.

"Where's that girl with the egg-plant?" her father shouted angrily.

"Excuse me, father," she said as she set the dish of vegetables down on the floor in front of the men. Her hands shook.

"You need a stronger hand, my girl," her father grumbled.

"Yes, father," said Sora meekly.

But she could not forget what she had heard. So even girls were up in the mountains. They had studied, they were certainly clever and knew much more about the world than she did. They had learned how to look after sick people and heal wounds. That was why they had gone to the mountains – to help those who were shooting and being shot at. It was easy to guess why her brothers spoke so harshly and so slightingly about them. They were immoral creatures in the men's eyes; more, they had taken this disgraceful step in a cause which her father considered if not definitely wrong, certainly one for concern. Sora thought otherwise about these girls. She envied them and admired their courage. They had been lucky to escape the dark narrowness of their homes and have the chance to study. And they had had the courage to go to the mountains.

One Friday, the weekly holiday, some relatives who farmed a piece of land in the countryside, sixty miles away, came to visit. Her uncle went with the men to the living-room. Her aunt remained with her mother in the kitchen, and Sora, who was now seventeen, was allowed to sit with them. The women chatted away about the family, work in the fields, clothes, and even about the unrest in the country.

"We notice it more in the country than you do here in the city, I suppose," said her aunt.

"That's men's business," her mother insisted. "It has nothing to do with us women."

Sora noticed how thoughtfully her aunt was contemplating her mother.

"In the country it's different, you know," her aunt said at length.

It made Sora think of the girl students who had gone to the mountains. But she did not like to question her aunt, because she knew her mother disliked talking about this.

Shortly after that she heard another conversation amongst the menfolk. They were talking about something which had made her father very angry indeed. One of her brothers was in the middle of his story when Sora came in with a dish.

"So when his leave was over the Vietnamese soldier wanted to go back to the French Army," he was saying.

Sora kept as quiet as a mouse, and the men took no notice of her.

"And his mother said to him: 'You're my only son. But if you go back to the French and not to the mountains, then you're not my son any longer!'"

Sora was back at the door when her father said:

"She was no mother to that boy."

It sounded like a curse. Sora could not resist listening behind the door to the rest of the story.

"And what did he do?"

"He went to the mountains."

Sora's face was flaming as she ran out into the kitchen.

"What's the matter? Don't you feel well?" her mother asked.

"Oh yes, I'm all right," she answered. "I just suddenly felt hot."

She ought to get married soon, her mother thought.

From that day, Sora was sure that if she had been a man she would have gone to the mountains, too. But what could she do – a girl with a veil who didn't even know how to bandage a wound? Well, couldn't she learn how – hadn't the men learnt to shoot? Besides, there was more than shooting and bandaging. How did people live when they went into the mountains? They needed water, and who fetched it for them? They needed food, and who procured it for them? And even if they did not have much to eat, still somebody had to cook it for them. There were all sorts of other things an ignorant girl could do. After all, she thought, most of the men fighting hadn't studied, either.

When she finally made up her mind to go to the moun-

tains, Sora was almost frightened out of it by the obstacles facing her. There were her parents. The mere thought of what she was going to do would seem like the end of the world to them – a frivolous break by a daughter who had disgraced herself and loaded shame on her family.

And she couldn't pick up and run away. She would have to know where to go – and how could she find that out? There must be a secret centre in the city which kept up contact with the men in the mountains. But how could she find it? She had no friends she could ask and she could not run around asking questions at random. She did ask her mother casually, as if she were simply curious. Her mother was immediately up in arms. She knew nothing about it! She didn't want to know, either!

One Friday her parents paid a return visit to their relatives in the country, leaving Sora at home to look after the children. During the days following their return, Sora spaced her questions to her mother: was it a wearing trip? where had the bus started? had many people travelled with them? what had it cost? how often did the bus make the trip? at what hour? She learned that one bus left at seven o'clock in the morning. This was a good time, for her father and brothers were already out of the house and she and her mother were left to look after the younger girls. She had a little money, which her father had given her from time to time so that she should learn to save.

The morning came when Sora left the house. She went out alone for the first time since she started wearing a veil. She got out into the street without being missed. In a black cloak, with her face veiled, only her closest friends would have recognised her by her walk. But nobody took any notice of her. She saw several people waiting at the bus stop. She waited till they were busy getting into the bus; then she slipped in behind a man near the end of the queue. She sat down beside him and the bus started.

Now she had to be careful to buy her ticket without

attracting attention. She had the exact fare in her hand. The conductor took it and gave her her ticket and went on. Things were going well so far, she thought. She got out of the bus at her stop. She remembered the village from an earlier visit, and she walked along happily to her relatives' home. She found her aunt alone.

"Salaam," she said, throwing back her veil.

"Why, Sora," her aunt exclaimed, "who brought you?"

"Nobody, I came by myself."

"Does your father know?" her aunt asked in surprise.

"No," said Sora, and added quickly, "when you came to see us you told mother that things were different in the country. Well, I want to go to the mountains, and I want you to help me."

"Well, let's sit down," said her aunt, plumping up a cushion. "Now, why do you want to go? Do you know anybody there?"

Sora related what she had heard and thought and done, although she knew no one in the mountains.

"It's hard on your parents," said her aunt, finally. "For all they know something terrible might have happened to you. You might have been enticed away or kidnapped, or you might even be dead. They'll be very much upset at home."

"Oh, I'm only a girl to them," said Sora.

"You're their child," reproved her aunt.

Sora did not answer.

"But I'll help you all the same," her aunt said.

"Oh! thank you, thank you," Sora exclaimed.

"Yes, but wait a minute, child. I can't just tell you to follow this or that path into the mountains – it'll take time! Your father will be looking for you. Your uncle will ask questions. We women always have to be up to little tricks. But you can stay here for the present with me, as if you were at home. You mustn't leave the house. Women don't wear veils here and people would know you were a stranger and there would be talk. Somebody might

tell your father or your brothers and that would be the end of everything. Will you stay here as long as I think it's necessary?"

"Oh yes, aunt."

"Well, let me talk to your uncle. He'll keep quiet. And now come and help me. We must have dinner ready on time."

A month went by. Sora's aunt was kind and listened to the girl's hopes and dreams, but kept referring back to the hardships of life in the mountains. Her uncle took no notice of her, and each day followed the other with a sameness of pattern.

One morning, her aunt asked her to wash a bundle of dirty linen, men's coarse underwear, coloured shirts and kerchiefs. Sora found a blood-stained bandage in the pocket of one of the shirts. She washed it without comment, for she guessed where it came from, although her aunt had not said that somebody had been there from the mountains the night before. Now, she thought, they would know she was waiting here.

Once her aunt told her that her father had been making inquiries about her. Then the days continued without event. About two months passed. One night her aunt woke her up.

"Get dressed," she said. "The time has come."

A young man with a gun was waiting in the kitchen. Beside him lay a bundle of clean clothes and a bag of food which her aunt had collected in the village. He and Sora walked silently into the night. For the first time in four years, she went out without her veil.

Sora had shared the hard life of the troops for some time when she heard that her father had sent a request to the partisans' headquarters to let his daughter come home. She asked for and was granted a month's leave.

Late one evening she knocked at the door of her parents' house. Her father opened the door and she slipped in.

"Peace be with you, father," she said.

In the dark passage she took off her veil. She had had it in her bundle as she came down from the mountains and had put it on again when it seemed wiser to do so.

Her father took her hand and led her into the little room where he and her mother slept. Her mother was awake. "Mama," said Sora softly.

"My child, how could you leave us?" whispered her mother, embracing her and sobbing.

"That's enough!" said her father. "We'll see her properly tomorrow and talk to her. Lie down here and sleep now, Sora."

"Thank you, father," she said. "Have the police been inquiring after me?"

"No."

"All the same, please don't tell anyone I'm here – not even the girls."

"But why not?" her mother asked quietly.

"Otherwise the police will come and take me away," she answered. "I'll stay in your room. I'd like to talk to you when there's nobody at home."

She spoke so firmly that even her mother was impressed. But her father was annoyed. "Go to sleep, now," he said.

Nevertheless, next morning when he woke up the son who usually went with him to the market, he told the lad to go alone – he was ill and would stay at home.

The sons left the house, the little girls were sent out to play and were told not to come back until midday so their father could have a quiet rest, and Sora's mother locked the door. The three sat down cross-legged and looked at each other.

"You've got thin," said her mother, "and your skin is ruined."

Sora said nothing.

"You're to get married," said her father. "Very soon, too."

She still said nothing.

"Your cousin Ali will take you. I shall tell his father today. We'll have the wedding in a few days."

As she still did not answer they thought she had acquiesced. The father had to decide about marriage in any case, and the child had only to agree. But Sora had said nothing at all, nor had she cast down her eyes humbly; she had looked straight at her father. He waited a moment, then got up. The women got up, too.

"It's the best thing, Sora," her mother broke the silence. "They live four hours away from here by bus. Nobody there knows you've been away."

"Forgive me, father." Sora spoke at last. "You can tie me up and hand me over, but a husband can't keep me tied up forever."

"You'll be covering us with shame," her father shouted.

"No, I bring you honour," she said softly.

Her father left them and her mother tried with entreaties, tears and reproaches to get her to change her mind.

"Please tell father to wait, mother. I came to you of my own free will and I want to talk freely to you. If I can't do that I shall have to leave at once, and that would be hard for all of us."

Her mother went out, upset and confused.

Sora lay down again with her hands behind her head. It was good to be at home, she thought. The journey had been long, tiring and dangerous. Partisan regulation forbade anybody going down from the mountains to use a public conveyance; there were frequent street check-ups and even women were liable to be searched. All adults in the towns had to have an identity card and since the unrest began country people were being photographed, and although they did not receive identity cards, the police had details of them in their files. Sora had no identity papers, so she had walked the sixty miles from village to village. Now she just wanted to sleep.

When the door opened again she had no idea how long she had slept.

"Excuse me, father, I was very tired," she said, sitting up at once.

"Don't get up," he said, "you wanted to talk to me?"

"Let me ask you a question first," she said. "Our headquarters said you wanted to see me. How did you know I was in the mountains?"

"Why, you sent someone here yourself."

"He was here, then? That's good. Now let me tell you how it all happened and what it was like there."

So she told him everything – how she had listened to scraps of their talk at mealtimes about the hospital servant, the Vietnamese soldier and the girl students, and about how she had decided to go to the mountains, revealing a part of her world about which he had had no inkling.

"Yes, and then you went off to your aunt," he grumbled.

"So you know about that, too?"

"Go on," he said.

She did not want to make him more angry, so she said no more about her aunt, but went on to tell him about life in the mountains, about her first-aid training given by a girl medical student, about the political course given by a student of philosophy, about how they managed to get food and water, about bandaging the wounded and learning to shoot.

"But why did you do all that?" he asked.

She tried to explain it simply.

"We're Bedouins, father. Our forefathers lived in the desert. If anybody tried to subjugate them they defended themselves. They preferred to die fighting than to live as slaves. Well, it's something like that with us today, you know."

Her mother came in and asked whether she should bring in his meal before the children came home.

"Yes, and bring food for Sora, too," he said.

The mother hesitated; this was a thoroughly revolutionary idea. Women ate after the men were finished, and got only what food was left over.

"Do as I tell you," he growled, not wanting his womenfolk to get notions. "Hurry up, too, or they'll be back before we're finished."

For the next several days, Sora's father kept up the pretence of being ill, for he was fighting to win back his daughter and save his family's honour as he saw it. He sat with Sora most of the time, listening to her, scolding her, unwillingly agreeing with this or that point, rejecting others, praising her courage in looks but condemning her actions in words, and harking back again and again to the incredible way in which she had broken with tradition. He could not get over her going off to the mountains with strange men.

Although he did not admit it, he was also worried about her safety. Sora tried to convince him that a woman could no more remain a man's slave than Algeria could remain the slave of the imperialists. Her father understood the comparison and found it dangerous, for it was a threat to their very way of life.

He returned again and again to the idea that she should marry.

"You will disappear and people will soon forget what has happened. Your cousin's family doesn't know you were away."

"But I should have to tell my cousin at once."

"All right, tell him the first night you're together. That will sweeten the confession."

"The sweetness might last some time," she answered. "But he would soon realise that he was an accomplice in the eyes of the French. Even if he did not know about it, the French would never believe him. The whole family would be in danger – his father, mother, brothers and sisters – and even their house and land."

There was a silence.

"It would be like a mine buried in front of the house," Sora went on. "It could explode at any time and blow us all up, even those who didn't know it was there. A man

who married me now would never have a moment's peace of mind, and neither should I. It would simply be hell for both of us."

"But there's danger everywhere these days," he persisted. "A woman's place is at home, and with one man."

"Women belong to the nation, just like the men," his daughter retorted.

Sora had been at home five days without convincing her father that she had to go back to the mountains; so she used her final argument – with a heavy heart, for she had wanted to spare her parents.

"The police know I was in the mountains," she said, and explained that this meant that wherever she was, married or unmarried, she might be discovered at any moment and would have to die defenceless.

"But we're all in danger if you go away again, too," said her father.

"Less danger, father. I ran away from you – that wasn't your fault. But the French would think my cousin was involved. You must see that."

"You're in greater danger in the mountains than here at home," her father insisted.

"If I have to die, I'll die in the mountains fighting for Algeria's freedom, as so many Bedouins died for what they called freedom," she said firmly. "If I stay here I shall simply be murdered sooner or later."

Her father looked at her for a long time.

"Go back to the mountains, then," he said at last.

"Don't say a word to mother about the police or about dying," she urged, kneeling down before him. "That's something only men should know," she added, smiling mischievously for the first time since she had been home.

"Or only womenfolk," her father grumbled. "I'm half a woman already for giving in to you."

"Oh no, you're a real man now," said Sora, laughing as she kissed him.

LUDWIG TUREK

who wrote

New Year's Eve for Liane

was born in Stendal in 1898. Although he learnt to be a compositor, he went to sea and later worked as machinist. He joined the Communist Party when it was founded. From 1930 to 1932 he lived in the Soviet Union, but he came back to Germany when Hitler seized power. He had to leave the country soon after this. Yet he found a way to return in 1940, remaining in Germany illegally, doing underground political work until the end of the war. His list of published works includes "A Worker Tells His Story" (1929); "Clear to Turn", an account of his adventures in exile – published 1949; "The Last Voyage", a sea tale (1950); and "Anne Lubitzke" (1952), the story of a woman who helped clear the rubble in bombed Berlin. In 1959, twelve short stories he had written in the past twenty-five years came out in book form.

Liane Bruckner was a pretty girl who worked in a factory in a small town in Brandenburg. She was not popular with the other girls there, and the reason for this was that the men found her irresistible. Whenever a man came into her workshop, which was entirely staffed by women, he noticed Liane. You could be absolutely certain that, after wandering up and down some, he would end up at Liane's

bench and linger there. This irritated the other girls and they were either envious, jealous or morally indignant at her behaviour, especially as she never missed an opportunity to display her adoring big black eyes, full, heart-shaped lips, firm breasts, well-formed hips and long, slim legs. She had two nicknames; the men called her "Cutie" and the girls called her "the love doll". She preened herself in the first and ignored the second.

But even the most ill-natured of her many enemies had little chance to catch her out, for Liane was a splendid worker. Whenever the factory had a celebration Liane turned up with a row of medals on her chest, and the little red flag with *Best Woman Worker in the Factory* embroidered on it in gold had hung over her work-bench for a long time. Nobody could claim that this was entirely due to her sex appeal, either, for you could see with your own eyes how quickly and accurately her fingers moved amongst her complicated tools. Once, when the Minister for Light Industry had inspected the factory, she had demonstrated a speed which held him and his colleagues transfixed for seven minutes on end. Evil tongues hinted that he had peeped inside her blouse, but this calumny was soon forgotten.

The fact that she worked so well was also the reason for the failure of a big campaign to improve her morals. The Party committee had a preparatory meeting on this with the trade union committee. In the quarrel which ensued old Werner Siebert, chairman of the union committee, banged on the table and shouted:

"Do you want to drive Liane out of the factory altogether with your sour moral sauce? Don't forget we've got our Plan to fulfil, and we can't do it without her."

Party secretary Herbert Rochmann, a much younger man, asked for an explanation of the term "sour moral sauce" and the entire union committee rose as one man and called him a hypocrite and "seven sleeper".

"What do you mean by 'seven sleeper'?" he shouted.

"We mean you've got girls all over the place – probably seven of them!"

Rochmann exploded and demanded proof of his loose morals.

"You've been here in the factory for five years," Siebert retorted, "and all that time you've never had a permanent girl friend, so you must be a 'seven sleeper'."

"I demand proof!" the Party secretary roared.

"You'd better prove it's not true first," said Siebert with a grin, and somebody else added, "Your sex life's a mystery."

There's no telling what might have happened after that if Otto Ried, the oldest of them, had not suggested that the debate be closed. It was agreed that Rochmann should have a serious talk with Liane.

"But I warn you," Siebert wagged his finger at Rochmann, "you be careful what you say to Liane, or she'll get huffy and leave us!"

About the same time – it was a couple of weeks before Christmas – the girls in the fitters' shop started off on a new tack. They claimed the love doll was popular enough with the men but she couldn't get one to marry her. Liane, who generally took no notice of back-biting, jumped up and solemnly undertook to marry before New Year's Day. It was a sensational promise. It set them guessing – had she an eye on anyone in particular? Had he agreed to marry her? Was she actually secretly engaged? Liane's denials to all their questions let loose a storm of giggling. What man would marry a bit of fluff like her – she was liable to deceive him the very next day!

Liane took her pledge seriously, although she was careful not to give herself away. She went on flirting – more outrageously than ever, if anything. The morally indignant had their hands full trying to keep up with all the incidents brought to their attention, the envious almost burst, and jealousy sprouted like a weed.

Things reached such a pitch that a near case of physical

violence occurred and Rochmann was urged to have his talk with Liane at once. He claimed he had a long and urgent report to write; after that he had to attend a conference; and the matter would have to wait.

As the year drew to a close, talk was of nothing but Liane's failure to find someone to marry her.

"We'll give you a jumping jack for Christmas," the girls jeered. "That'll be a comfort, anyway."

Catty jokes shot over to Liane like poisoned arrows and she began to get genuinely nervous, she had still had no luck – how should she persuade anybody to make her a serious proposal of marriage? Every day that passed was like a lost battle. She smothered her worries in an almost incredible amount of work and big piles of finished parts stacked up beside her bench. The foreman began to think the preparatory meeting had been a warning to her. He made the mistake of hinting as much to her.

"If you go on like this they won't have a thing on you," he whispered, bending over her.

"What do you mean by that?" Liane asked curtly.

"Well, but you knew they'd had a meeting about your morals, didn't you? Rochmann wanted to give you a good dressing-down!"

The effect was catastrophic. Liane sat bolt upright for a moment, then her big black eyes flashed dangerously and she shot the foreman a look which set him back on his heels. He seized her hand, but she snatched it away, tore off her overall and flung it down at his feet, then marched out of the workshop. The girls dropped their tools in amazement and the foreman turned pale, dashed over to the window and saw Liane striding across the yard and out of the factory gate.

It was the gate-keeper who brought the news of Liane's departure to the union committee's office. Werner Siebert rushed over to Rochmann and found him telephoning to the foreman. Siebert listened impatiently.

"You can't fulfil the Plan without her? That's pure

nonsense! . . . I know she had the most difficult job . . . nobody's indispensable . . . Yes, of course . . ."

Siebert could not contain himself.

He snatched the receiver out of Rochmann's hand.

"Horst? Listen, Horst. It's Werner. Come over here a minute. It's pretty important, this business. We can't fix it up by telephone."

"But look, I've no time now!" Rochmann protested. "In five minutes –"

Siebert thumped the table with his big fist. "You'll stay where you are!" he roared.

"But I've got to go to the area committee. It's a question of planning!" Rochmann argued, thinking he was playing a trump card.

"That's fine," Siebert shouted, "but the plans have to be carried out here in the factory. You just stay where you are now!"

The foreman rushed in, collapsed into a chair and eyed Rochmann helplessly.

"We'll have to do something at once. Liane's got to come back or we shan't get through by the end of the year. We'll never get all those fittings finished if she doesn't come back!"

Siebert began a sort of cross-examination.

"Why didn't you have that talk with Liane, Rochmann? We'd agreed on that. Don't we carry out resolutions here any more?"

Young Rochmann began to look guilty.

"But you know what a lot I have to do – the report, the conference and . . ."

"Herbert! When are you going to get it into your head that the factory comes first? The factory is the basis of everything. We're at the basis of things . . ."

He laid his big fist on Herbert's shoulder.

"Now you do what I tell you. Go to Liane's home, but don't talk to her there; her landlady doesn't have to hear everything. Take the car and drive her to the club. Then

sit down with her in a quiet corner. Liane has got to come back. Horst is absolutely right there. Even if we could find anybody to take her place later, we can't do it now, just when we're finishing off the year's work. Don't forget, Herbert, the day after tomorrow is New Year's Eve! We've only two days left!"

Without a word, Rochmann fetched his coat from the cloakroom.

When he had gone, old Siebert walked to the window and looked out over the yard. Then, a grin on his lined features, he went to the telephone, stood there considering for some minutes, then picked up the receiver and called the club.

The landlady showed Rochmann into Liane's room. She was lying on the couch, her eyes red and swollen, and did not seem at all pleased to see him. After a few awkward minutes, he then sat down on the edge of the couch.

"I have the car outside, Liane," he said gently. "Will you come over to the club with me?"

"What for?"

He might have told her why he had come, but he suddenly felt that the way he had spoken about her at the meeting had been all wrong. This pretty, tear-blotched little face did not fit in with his criticism.

"Perhaps we might have a glass of wine together?"

She got up obediently, for she always liked to fall in with suggestions men made to her, and went over to the mirror to repair her make-up. A little later she was sitting beside Rochmann in the car.

They drove quickly to the club-house, which was a short way out of the town. It was almost empty at that hour and they had the small wine restaurant to themselves.

The waitress greeted them by name, almost as if she had been expecting them, and Rochmann ordered a bottle of Chinese dessert wine. "But that's a very heavy wine, you know, Herr Rochmann," she reminded him.

"Never mind," said Liane, "the stronger the better."

The remark rather surprised the waitress, but Rochmann insisted that that was what they wanted.

After the first two glasses Rochmann attempted to get down to business. He coughed as if about to open a meeting.

"Now to get to the point, Liane," he began. "I asked you to come here . . ."

She smoothed a lock of fair hair out of his face and stroked his cheek gently. This confused him so that he had to start again.

"I asked you to come here . . ."

"I know all about it," she said softly, leaning against him.

But what did she know, he wondered. Had somebody else spoken to her?

They clinked glasses again.

"Here's to success in your work next year," she said. "Have you decided how you're going to celebrate New Year's Eve?"

Queer, thought Rochmann. What does she want to know that for? And he realised that he would have to take a grip on himself if he were not to make a fool of himself with this beautiful girl. Whatever would the others think of him? But his fingers itched to touch her and find out whether her beauty was as genuine as everybody insisted. He put his arm round her shoulders. That's surely permitted in a wine restaurant, he thought. But he wasn't at all sure whether what Liane did next was also permitted; she took his head in her two hands and gazed earnestly at him out of her big, black eyes. Her lips parted slightly and it seemed to Rochmann that she was opening her heart to him.

Liane kissed him fervently; suddenly, for the first time in his life, Rochmann felt the stunning happiness of real love. He had been a "seven sleeper" and the reproach against him for this had been justified. But now he felt

that this girl, who was so beautiful and so warm-hearted, was the only girl for him.

Just as he was kissing her for the third time, just as tears of joy were gathering on her long eye-lashes and slipping down her rosy cheeks, the door opened. Siebert of the union committee, old Gerhard of the Party committee, Liane's foreman, the factory manager and Frau Thuemler of the Women's Democratic League marched in together, bearing a huge bunch of red roses.

"Congratulations!" shouted old Siebert, seizing them both by the hand. "We got that fixed up," he continued cheerfully, his face beaming.

The waitress entered and smilingly nudged Siebert, who handed her the twenty pfennigs he owed her for a telephone call.

The two went to the registry office on New Year's Eve. The girls in Liane's workshop got up a collection for a wedding present and the factory organised a splendid wedding party. At midnight they all raised their glasses while Siebert thundered out his toast:

"Long live Liane and Herbert, our youngest couple! Long live the New Year with all its hopes for the future! Long live Socialism! Hip, hip, hurrah!"

Everybody joined in with a will and the glasses clinked cheerfully.

BORIS DJACENKO

who wrote

The Meeting

has had an exciting life. Born in 1917 in Riga, he was expelled from school for resisting fascism, stowed away on a ship to Rotterdam in 1939, moved on to Paris from there and was arrested for the distribution of political pamphlets . . . The Nazis removed him from Vernet internment camp and sent him to forced labour in Germany. He escaped and earned his living as stage hand, waiter and cook. When the war ended he got into contact with Red Army troops and was appointed mayor of a small town. His books include a thrilling story about working class comradeship in the struggle against fascism, titled "Heart and Ashes" (1955); "And Yet They Loved One Another" (1960), a collection of stories concerning people in many countries. He is also author of two plays, "People on the Frontier" and "Jungle", written in 1950 and 1951.

Matthias Weissdorn had been walking up and down by the Elbe for more than an hour. The weather was surprisingly mild for the beginning of April, mist hung low over the river and the moon was rising behind the Japanese Palace. The old city stood out in silhouette against the sky. It looked just as it had looked fifteen or a hundred and fifty years before, and he had a feeling that the

chimes of St Sophia's might ring out at any moment now, lights would flame up in the castle windows and people would come out and hurry across to the Semper Opera to listen to Richard Strauss or Wagner.

But nobody appeared on the open space before the opera, because it was only a burnt-out shell, and no windows blazed with light, because only the ghostly façades of old Dresden remained. It would be many years before the city rose again in its old splendour, Matthias thought.

He noticed a girl sitting alone on a bench on the promenade. She was not more than twenty, had a small face and looked gentle and attractive.

When he passed the bench again and found her still sitting there, he sat down beside her.

He lit a cigarette, and glanced at her face by the light of the match. He liked it, and without giving the matter much thought he spoke to her.

"Nice evening."

She started slightly, but did not move. Matthias opened his cigarette case and offered her one.

"Thanks," she said, and took it.

"It's unusually warm for April," he said.

"But the water must still be very cold," she said.

"Are you working here in Dresden, or studying?" Matthias asked.

She took a deep pull at her cigarette, but did not answer.

"Would you care to spend the evening with me?" he asked. "I know a little students' café you might like."

"There are always people about here," she said, and stood up.

He thought her behaviour a little strange, but he got up and walked along beside her. She was very lightly clad, he noticed, and there was a cool wind blowing up from the river, so she must have been cold – in fact, she was shivering. He wondered whether he should slip his jacket over her shoulders, but he thought of his identity papers in his wallet and decided not to. Then he remembered he

had left his cigarette case on the bench. He asked her to wait while he fetched it.

As he ran back he looked over his shoulder; and stopped short.... In the moonlight a few yards from the place where the boats tied up, he saw a head and an arm sticking out of the water. The girl had jumped into the river.

He threw off his jacket, tore off his shoes and jumped into the water. When he had recovered from the first cold shock he struck out strongly, caught the girl by the hair as she drifted downstream, and dragged her to shore, gasping with the effort.

A few people had gathered at the spot, and they helped Matthias to carry the girl up the bank. The same ambulance which took her to hospital drove Matthias home. He was shivering so much that he had to go to bed at once.

When Kathleen woke up the next morning she had to think for some time before she could recall the details of what had happened the evening before. She lay in a single room in the hospital, so there was nobody to disturb her.

Yesterday, after Frank had left her, she had sat for a long time, numbed and quite unable to grasp the fact that the man who had been her first love had lied to her and deceived her from the day they had met. She had told him she was pregnant, and he had informed her that he had been married for years.

She had not gone back after lunch to the photographer's studio where she worked. She spent the whole afternoon washing and ironing as if she were getting ready to go on holiday, although she had already made up her mind to do away with herself.

She had gone down to the river in the evening and a man had sat down beside her; he had talked and she had made some sort of reply – she could not remember what. She stood up, hoping to get rid of him, but he had followed her. Then when he finally did go away she had jumped into the river....

And now she was still alive, although she did not want to live at all, any more than she had wanted to go on living yesterday.

The doctor came in to examine her. He did his best to cheer her up.

"I know you mean it kindly, doctor," she interrupted him, "but it's just no use."

He went on talking, making the usual comforting remarks, until he saw that she wasn't listening. She was gazing out of the window, which was opened a crack, so that the noises from the street below were muffled. Her room was on the fourth floor.

"But you're just not listening, Kathleen," said the doctor.

"Get rid of the baby for me, doctor," she said. "That's the only thing that can really help me."

"You don't mean that seriously."

"Get rid of it for me, doctor," she insisted. "I don't want any general advice about life."

That really would be the simplest way out, the doctor thought, but he had no legally acceptable grounds for interfering.

"Well," he said, "before we talk further, let's see if you really are going to have a baby."

"Do you think I could be mistaken?"

"It's always possible."

But when he had the results of the examination in front of him the next day Dr Rodemerk had no doubt at all that Kathleen was pregnant. Nevertheless he thought it was too soon to tell her this.

"So you see you're not getting a baby at all," he said casually, and stood up.

She looked at him consideringly for some time.

"That's the real truth, doctor?"

"Don't be silly, Kathleen. A doctor only tells a lie if he thinks he can save a patient's life that way. There's nothing to save in your case. As soon as the fever goes down

you can pack your things and go home. We need your bed for people who are really ill."

Next morning a man came into her room whom she would have preferred not to see. He had a thin, freckled face and a shy smile.

"Here's the gentleman who pulled you out of the water," said the nurse curtly.

"Do you feel better today?" he asked when they were alone. "I'm so sorry I didn't realise the state of mind you were in."

"It'll pass," she said.

He nodded.

"Could I help you in any way? I mean . . ."

She shook her head.

"Would you rather I went away?"

"No . . . stay a little while."

He looked at her thoughtfully.

"You know we all have times when we think life's not worth living. And there are other times when we think life's so wonderful we'd like to live forever. But it's not true either way."

"What do you do?" she asked.

"I'm an engineer. In the new aeroplane works."

"Your voice is so quiet, it makes me feel I'd like to go to sleep. I'm so tired . . ."

He took her hand and held it.

"Well, just go to sleep now."

"But if the nurse comes?"

"I know Dr Rodemerk, she won't come."

"It's such a long time since I said to myself that I was really happy! Such a long time . . ."

Her eyes were wide open, and she wept.

Visiting time had been over for three quarters of an hour when Matthias left her. Kathleen had fallen asleep at last.

A month later they were walking along the shore of the

Elbe. He had been seeing her nearly every day. Spring had spread a tender green over the trees and shrubs, they heard a nightingale calling in the quiet of the evening, and the sky was as smooth as velvet.

"How impossible it seems that I wanted to die a month ago," Kathleen exclaimed.

"And to me it seems impossible that I didn't even know you a month ago," said Matthias.

They sat down on a bench on the promenade.

"I was absolutely desperate," she said. They could hear the gentle lapping of the water. "What are you thinking about?"

"About us. Will you marry me?"

"Of course I will," she said without a moment's hesitation.

They stopped in front of the house where Kathleen lived.

"I hate to leave you alone now. But I suppose I must."

"There's no must about it. Come with me," she said, taking his hand.

They were married a few days later and moved into Matthias' little two-room apartment in the suburbs.

A new chapter began in Kathleen's life and she would have been completely happy if it had not been for the depression from which Matthias suffered from time to time. He would lie on the couch for hours without speaking and nothing interested him. But he was generally whistling in his bath again the next morning, doing his exercises and boxing with the sand-bag which he hung from the lamp-hook in the sitting-room, despite her protests, and making fun of his fits of melancholy.

One evening, as she lay in his arms, Kathleen said, "Everything that I was and did before I met you seems unreal to me, and it's difficult to see back into my old life. I sometimes think – and please don't laugh at me – that when I jumped into the Elbe I really was drowned

and I'm not the same Kathleen now but someone else."

"You really are quite different."

"If you only knew how much I love you, Matthias!" she went on. "That's why I'm sometimes so worried that something might happen to you and I might lose you."

"You won't be afraid any more when we have a baby."

"But we've only been married a month and may have to wait a bit," she said, pleased that he wanted a child from her. She knew how much he loved children.

When he fetched his car from the garage to drive to work in the mornings there were always a few children waiting to drive a little way with him, and when he came home they ran out to meet him as if they had some secret way of knowing when he was coming. If he were in a hurry he would just sit down for a few minutes on the porch with them, but if he had time to spare he would take them to the square to the bench under the chestnut tree. He sometimes stayed so long that Kathleen had to fetch him in to supper.

So she was overjoyed when, in the second month after they were married, she was able to tell him she was pregnant. She had been to see Dr Rodemerk the day before and he had confirmed it without hesitation. When she told Matthias he hugged her, lifted her up and carried her round the apartment until he was out of breath.

Kathleen was wonderfully happy the next few months. She kept thinking about how the baby would be a part of Matthias and herself and how excited he would be when it started to walk. She felt no fear or worry. She bloomed under the loving attention Matthias gave her.

When she was in her seventh month, Matthias had to go to a conference in Prague, and was to be away three weeks. He had not been feeling well for some days and Kathleen was disquieted as she saw him off at the station. It was the first time she had been separated from him. But she did not let him see how upset she was, for she did not want to spoil his trip.

Five days later, as she was cleaning up the flat, her labour pains began. At first she did not realise what it was since she was only in the seventh month of pregnancy, as she thought; but after a while she knew she would have to get to the hospital, quickly.

She gave birth to a girl the same evening. The baby's weight left no room for the belief that it was premature, that it was Matthias' child.

She was stunned, she could barely grasp what had happened: the child she had longed for, that Matthias had so much wanted, was not his but the child of a man whom she hated. When the new-born baby was brought in to her to nurse she felt such a wave of dislike that she wanted to push it away from her.

Later on, a tenderness spread through her for this helpless little being which could not help coming into the world unwanted. Yet she fully realised that something had broken up in her life with Matthias which could never be mended. She could not expect him to accept what had happened and to continue their relationship unchanged. Just because he loved her so much, just because he had looked forward so much to their child, he would feel terribly bitter now.

She thought, I could let Matthias think that it was his child. He need not learn the truth when he returns from Prague, then everything could remain the same between us . . . No, nothing would be the same. Kathleen knew that she could not live with such a lie.

She lay awake half the night, trying to think of some way out. But she saw that she would have to tell Matthias the truth and that this would break up their life together.

She had a letter from him almost every third day, but she could not bear to write that her child had been born.

He came back a day earlier than she expected. When the bell rang she was just getting ready to nurse the baby. She put it back into its pram and went to open the door, thinking it was the postman. When she saw Matthias she

had such a shock that she had to hold on to the door-post. The baby began to cry.

"It's here already? And you didn't send me a telegram?"

He embraced her, then went into the room to look at the baby. The words she had planned stuck in her throat. She just could not say them. Instead, she began to cry.

"What's up?" he asked. He sat her down and took his place beside her. When he put his arm round her shoulder, it all poured out – it wasn't his baby, its father was her former friend, she had hoped it would be born dead, she knew it was all over between them . . .

Matthias stood up and went over to the window, with his back to her.

She grew calmer.

"I've already looked round for work and a room," she said. "If you like I'll move out today. I expect that would be best."

"Don't be silly, Kathleen," he said, his back still toward her. "The best thing to do would be to finish feeding the baby."

When she made no move to get up, he added, "I knew about it long ago. Dr Rodemerk told me."

"And you never said a word to me?" . . . she stammered.

"It wouldn't have done any good."

Time to Come

The Last Night of the 20th Century

STEFAN HEYM

STEFAN HEYM

who wrote

The Last Night of the 20th Century

was a published poet while he was still a Berlin student. A poem against the Nazis put him on the Gestapo's list. He escaped to Czechoslovakia on April 10, 1933, his twentieth birthday. After two years, he emigrated to the U.S.A. and served in the American Army as soldier, non-com, and officer in World War II. In 1952, he came back to Germany. Mr. Heym writes in English and all of his novels have had their original publication in New York and London: "Hostages" (1942); "Of Smiling Peace" (1944); "The Crusaders" (1948); "The Eyes of Reason" (1951); "Goldsborough" (1954); two short-story collections, "Cannibals" (1957); and "Shadows and Lights" (1963). Seven Seas reprinted "The Crusaders" and "Hostages" – the latter as "The Glasenapp Case". His new novel, "The Lenz Papers", is a major work with a historical theme.

Shopping for Christmas, 1999, was something of a problem. What I mean to say is that Communism, where everybody gets according to his needs, is all right; but once those needs are filled you have a hell of a time finding suitable Christmas presents.

Way back on the 89th floor of our Central Department Store I finally discovered a little bauble I thought that

Gertrude would like – a handsomely done ring with a diamond the size of a pigeon egg. The diamond had a gorgeous sparkle, really amazing when you considered that the thing was only a by-product of some molecular conversion process. Don't ask me for details; ask my friend Dr Peter Nkomo of the West Africa Institute of Technology; he can explain it to you down to the last twist of the last molecule.

For myself, I tipped Gertrude off to an electronic eye edition of the complete works of Babayumah, in 20 volumes, with notes and an introduction by the famous literary critic Benvenuto Morales who is known for his deep reflections that no one, himself included, quite understands. So as to be sure of Santa's bringing me the Babayumah, I had my plastic shopping ticket punched by the automatic salesman; all Gertrude had to do was to take our heli-jet and pick up the edition.

We both like Babayumah. He started writing in the early seventies, and after the usual difficulties with the literary popes of that period, he was recognised as a latter-day Shakespeare, and there was an international day of mourning when he, along with the others on that first spaceship to Jupiter, perished. He was a pioneer. He loved new things and new ideas, and today's school kids recite his Ode to Curiosity:

"Man, Curious, Creative, Reacher Towards the Universe . . ."

Anyhow, the edition was just what I wanted – no bigger than an old-fashioned match-box, you insert it into the electronic eye reader, attach the semi-conductor sensor to your temples, and the wonderful words and images stream straight into your mind while you sit back and relax and give yourself up to the poet's thoughts.

After Christmas came the question of New Year's Eve and what to do about it. It wasn't just any old New Year's Eve. The ancients worried that the world would end about the year 2000; let me tell you mankind had more than

once been pretty close to blowing itself to bits, this last century. But we had managed. Somehow, at critical moments, there had always been enough millions of aroused people to stop the insanity; and when 1976 rolled around, just two hundred years after the first American revolution, and there occurred in the United States what we now call The Great Change, the main danger was over.

Last New Year's Eve everybody had dropped in on the Nkomos. We had come from as far away as four thousand miles.... And it had been a lovely party; young Mrs Nkomo was a gracious hostess; even O'Connor, who got so drunk on Cognac pills, agreed. But now a new baby had arrived at the Nkomos, and somebody else had better throw the party, so why not us?

I stuck my pleasant address tape into the intake device of the All-Purpose Communicator. Gertrude said I should also use the tape with the unpleasant people on it; she was superstitious and didn't want the year 2000 to start with too harmonious an affair. But I argued that I had drawn the line rather loosely when listing the more pleasant among our acquaintances and, at any rate, there would be enough ringers to make things exciting.

The APC began to buzz. Dr Peter Nkomo appeared on the screen. He looked fine, with his handsome tan and his new polytone shirt whose colour adjusts to the wearer's mood and surroundings. I asked him if he and Ruth would like to drop over for New Year, and he said Yes, provided they could get their automatic baby sitter fixed before the 31st. The thing had been advertised as absolutely foolproof, one of those machines that not only programme and adjust, but also repair themselves if necessary; only his had developed some kinks, and now he was waiting for the repair man to come from Bratsk in Siberia, where the gadget was mass-produced. I suggested that he reserve space on the strato-bus, anyhow. He agreed; but he was worried about getting from the stratoport to my house, because as usual on New Year's

Eve, there wouldn't be a heli-taxi anywhere. I said I would send my jet to pick him and Ruth up, and he said please to be sure to press the right button this time. I promised with renewed apology for last time – last time he visited I touched the wrong button on the telepilot on my desk, and my heli-jet had flown to the wrong stratoport, and Peter had had to wait for an hour before the mistake was corrected – three times as long as it had taken him to fly in on the bus from his College in West Africa.

We invited the Lius from Shanghai – he was a worker who had helped to develop the cosmic ray resistant lightweight metals which would make possible flights to Alpha Centauri, the sun nearest to ours. Next, we spoke to Suzanne Périchord of the Plastic Video Ensemble of the Comédie-Française, which is considered slightly better than the Direct-Performance Ensemble; what a beautiful girl! Then we contacted Nikolai Nikolayevich Chervenkov, known as the Father of the Omega particle, and his charming wife Galina, who re-did the famous murals of the University of San Jacobo after the earthquake of '95; the Mukherjees from Bombay – he's an expert on the prevention of tropical diseases; the noted philosophers Prof. Dr Schulze-Saeckingen and Prof. Dr Dr Schulze-Groeningen.... But I don't want to bore you with the entire list. All in all, we expected between forty and fifty people, from pretty much all over the globe, and if we were lucky, one from outer space: Hannibal T. Johnson, due back from directing the landing operations on the moons of Saturn.

Food and drink – Gertrude put together an elaborate menu – we had catered from the Commune Catering Service. We had it sent in two forms – *naturel* and *en pilule;* there are always people who like to get their eating and drinking over with by swallowing a few pills, and occasionally you meet a guzzler like O'Connor who takes his Cognac pills with real beer chasers. For those who might forget to bring theirs, we also had a few Highspeed Elec-

tronic Simultaneous Translators – the latest model worn under the lapel and called Discreet Joe, because it translates any languages desired while automatically eliminating strong language. Incidentally, some do not consider this an advantage.

By nine p.m., Greenwich Mean Time – you have to agree on some common time when you have guests from a lot of meridians – people began to arrive. The first was Old Man Gallasz. He was 139 by now, had taken the Rumanian cure three times, grown new hair and divorced his latest wife. As a former general he was always on the dot. Right after him, I heard my heli-jet settle gently on the roof, and the Nkomos, their automatic baby sitter apparently in shape, came down the stairs.

By ten p.m. the house was full, and we couldn't seat everybody. I knew that our parties were popular with discriminating people East and West – but I didn't know they were that popular. At least another fifty had dropped in on the spur of the moment, as they said, or because they "thought" they had been invited, or because it was New Year's Eve. An Angry Young Man, a deep sea oil prospector as it turned out, held forth on the problem of overpopulation – what with cancer eliminated, heart muscle renewals, and that blasted Rumanian cure, people could hardly find a reason for dying; and with nearly all the necessaries of life provided amply and for free, the stork kept arriving at the slightest encouragement. The Reverend Malthus would turn in his grave if he could see the crowding of the globe in general and at this party in particular.

Liu asked the Angry Young Man what was wrong about having many people on earth. The more people, the more creative thought, the better our life. The oceans were sufficiently large and hydrogen fusion sufficiently developed to furnish the energies to sustain a hundred, a thousand times the population of 1999. What did the young man suggest? A return to the policies of the first half of the

century, when nations were bled regularly through world wars? Had they lived better then? Or hadn't they starved in a great many countries, while in others a few rich people monopolised and restricted productive capacities?

The Angry Young Man muttered that he didn't want to argue anything; he came from the lonely depths of the sea where Plastic Video was the only recreation available. All he wanted this evening was enough *Lebensraum* to profess his feelings to PV's sweetheart, curvaceous Suzanne Périchord; furthermore, Mr Liu needn't inject politics into everything just because he was a candidate for a commissionership in the World Planning Authority.

Mr Liu was much too wise to reply. He turned to me and to my querying confirmed that he might get one of the 183 seats allotted to the Chinese People's Republic on the World Planning Authority, the executive body of the United Nations.

But the argument had somehow turned everybody's mind to more serious aspects. The talk was of the century that was fast sinking into the flood of time, and of the future that lay ahead. Prof. Dr Schulze-Saeckingen and Prof. Dr Dr Schulze-Groeningen agreed that the amazing progress of the century's last decades was rooted in the scientific, technical, and social developments of the forties and fifties; but they couldn't agree on what to call the phenomenon. Schulze-Saeckingen maintained that it was another industrial revolution, similar to the one that had taken place at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, and that had been described by Marx in *Das Kapital*. Schulze-Groeningen, however, said it was a technical revolution, at best; for the simple reason that Marx had not spoken of a first industrial revolution, so how could there be a second?

We left the professors to their learned dispute. Whatever the name of the thing, man, in the space of a few years, had increased his energies a millionfold; machines did most of his mechanical thinking for him at speeds a

million times those of his own thoughts; the combination of cybernetics and nuclear forces made possible the conquest of space and made antiquated the proud machinery of the fifties.

But as antiquated as the old techniques was the old order of things. When ten minutes of human labour gave you ten times the amount of goods formerly produced in ten hours, free enterprise had to go down the drain – though it needed pushing. For a short period, in some Western countries, between 60 and 80 percent of the adult population had been "redundant", as they called it. Everything was tried to hold down the people: propaganda, bribery, Social-Democracy, gun. None of it worked; in the end people got wise to themselves, especially since the Eastern half of the world had already organised itself on a sensible basis; and common sense is the most infectious of all bacilli. When the last Rockefeller signed that piece of paper and reluctantly handed it to an armed and determined nationalisation committee of oil workers and engineers, the old order disappeared forever.

But the trouble we had, then, with the old ways of thinking!

Of the many memorable, revolutionary events of the Twentieth Century – the Great October Revolution, the battle of Stalingrad, the liberation of China, the completion of the Aswan Dam, the Great Change in the U.S.A. – one of the most interesting was the Campaign to Uproot the Past.

Some of those helping us tonight to usher in the year 2000 had actively participated in that campaign. I remember an international mass meeting held simultaneously in all the larger cities of the world. It was as if I could still hear Nikolai Nikolayevich Chervenkov's tremendous voice booming out against lust for power, greed of possession, narrow-mindedness, self-adulation, provincialism – some of the evils being warred against in those

years by him, Mr Liu, Mukherjee, and millions of the best and most forward-looking people in all countries on earth.

The campaign lasted from 1989 to 1992. There were times when things looked as if the struggle would never get anywhere. But the facts of life were on the side of progress. People who flew in atomic-powered planes could no longer be tied to the apron strings of old-fashioned forms of administration. After 1986 consumer goods became so ample that the essentials of life were supplied free of charge. A new attitude towards possessions called for new forms of community life and a new set of genuine ethics. People's thinking and people's morals had to be re-formed to fit the new possibilities of production; the old ego had to be smashed so as to unfetter the limitless capabilities of man.

It was done. I think that, with the finishing of this campaign, the gates to the Age of Communism were thrown wide open. Of course there were incorrigibles. For them we established the Reservation. It lies on a large plateau in the Pamir mountains, near where the last specimens of the abominable snowman were found. A semi-conductor artificial climate regulator has changed the Reservation into a permanent Florida, and there its inmates live out their days – not bothering us, and we not bothering them.

"Couldn't we have a look at it, for the last time in this century?" said Ruth Nkomo.

I switched on the All-Purpose Communicator. A few turns on the dials, a click of the total-vision button – and there it was.

General Gallasz, who hadn't changed easily from a dyed-in-the-wool military man into the mild-mannered, civilised old gentleman he now was, glanced at his watch and then at the screen.

"Ah – the past!" he said. "Very appropriate. . . ."

I adjusted the dials on the APC. As with a camera moving in on an object, we approached a marble-columned

building – the Reservation stock exchange. There was great excitement, apparently, among investors and jobbers. Stocks in enterprises that long ago had been nationalised were bought faster than the ticker could manage, quite as East values had been traded on Western stock exchanges around the middle of the century. Then came a selling wave; somebody had spread a rumour that the Communists were dumping red caviar; and the stock exchange leaders were drafting a protest letter to a State Department they pretended was still in existence.

A slight twist of the dial brought us a group of venerable military officers gathered around a sand pile, seriously pushing miniature atomic rocket guns over imagined miles of territory; a quarrel arose as to who had been annihilated first, and one half of the officers feebly tried to batter the umpire who had decided for the other half. Finally we sighted a tremendous office building. I pressed the transparency lever; the APC penetrated the walls of a large hall equipped with numerous desks. At them sat men who shifted huge piles of papers, stamped them and pushed them on to the next desk. There was one shaggy-bearded, rheumy-eyed fellow with a huge stamp which he tremblingly raised every once in a while and then brought down with a thud on some unfortunate document. The stamp had only one word on it: *Verboten!* At the desks behind his a whole cluster of men poured over galleys of printed matter, marked passages that appeared questionable, crossed out sentences they thought unorthodox, and stuck scissors into words that sounded dangerous to their official minds.

"Turn it off!" said Gertrude. "Turn it into the future!"

"The instrument to look into the future," I said, "is still to be invented. We may not even trouble to invent it – what do we want it for? The future and how it will be is up to us – we are its builders!"

Mr Liu laid his slender hand on the main switch of the APC. The Pamir plateau vanished. A tall, beautiful

building with golden towers rose from the screen. Bells chimed.

Then there was the tooting of horns, the boisterous, happy laughter of people – from 42nd and Broadway, from Tien An Men, from the Red Square, from Unter den Linden, Piccadilly Circus, Champs-Elysées – from everywhere.

"Happy New Year!" said Dr Nkomo.

"A Happy New Century!" said Nikolai Nikolayevich Chervenkov.

"A Happy Millennium!" said Mr Liu.

The door was torn open. On its threshold, red-haired, broad-shouldered, a smile in his eyes, stood Hannibal T. Johnson. Somebody handed him a glass of Soviet champagne.

"Greetings from Saturn," Johnson called out. "We made it! Russians, Chinese, Indians, Americans, Africans – people from every land, people of every tongue – what a team!"

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